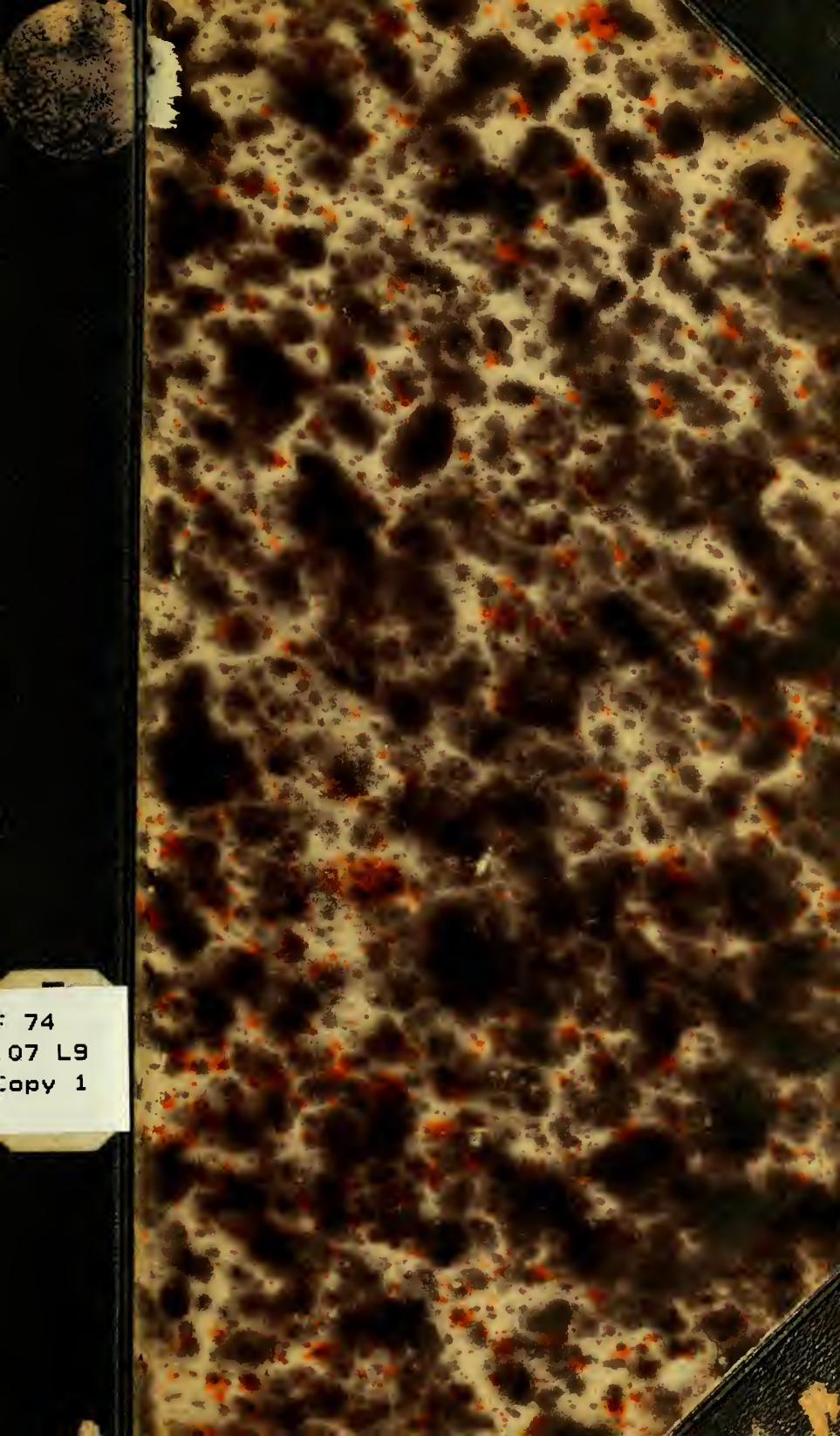
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

TWO

DISCOURSES,

DELIVERED SEPTEMBER 29, 1839,

ON OCCASION OF

THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE GATHERING

OF THE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, QUINCY:

WITH

AN APPENDIX.

By WILLIAM P. LUNT.

BOSTON:
JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.
M DCCC XL.

CAMBRIDGE PRESS:

METCALF, TORRY, AND BALLOU.

Quincy, Oct. 11, 1839.

To the Rev. Wm. P. Lunt,

Dear Sir,

We have the honor (as a Committee appointed for the purpose) to present to you attested copies of votes this day passed by the First Congregational Society in this town, expressing the thanks of the Society for the Discourses delivered by you on the 29th of September last, and authorizing a request to be made to you for copies thereof for publication.

We take pleasure, Sir, in pursuance of those votes, respectfully to request you to furnish copies for that purpose.

We are, Sir, with respect and in Christian fellowship,

Your friends and servants,

Samuel Savil, William Spear, James Newcomb,

Josiah Brigham, Lewis Bass.

Quincy, Oct. 11, 1839.

At a regular meeting of the First Congregational Society in Quincy, this day holden at the Town Hall pursuant to warrant, — the Hon. Thomas Greenleaf Moderator, — the following vote was unanimously sustained, — viz. :

Voted, That the thanks of this Society be presented to the Rev. Mr. Lunt for the very interesting and eloquent Sermons, delivered by him on Sunday, the twenty-ninth day of September last, on the interesting occasion of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the gathering of the First Church in this town, and that he be respectfully requested to furnish a copy for the press.

Voted, That the Parish Committee and the present officiating Deacons of the church be a Committee to communicate the same to the Rev. Mr. Lunt.

A true copy of record.

Attest,

Ibrahim Bartlett, *Parish Clerk.*

To Deacons Samuel Savil, William Spear, James Newcomb, and Messrs. Josiah Brigham, and Lewis Bass.

Gentlemen,

I have received your letter of the 11th inst., accompanied with the votes passed at a meeting, held on that day, of the First Congregational Society in this town, requesting a copy, for the press, of the two Discourses delivered by me, on the 29th day of September last, on occasion of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the gathering of our Church.

I feel grateful to the Society for their kind reception of my humble endeavor to do justice to that occasion, which was so interesting to us all as a religious community.

I will cheerfully furnish a copy of the Discourses, so soon as I can prepare the manuscript for the printer.

I am, Gentlemen, with Christian regard,

Your friend and minister,

Wm. P. Lunt.

Quincy, Oct. 18, 1839.

TO

MY PARISHIONERS,

FOR WHOM THEY WERE PREPARED,

AND AT WHOSE REQUEST THEY ARE NOW PUBLISHED,

THESE DISCOURSES

ARE

Affectionately Inscribed

1685.

*

DISCOURSE I.

Deut. viii. 11, 12, 14, 17, 18.

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God: —

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God.

Brethren and Fathers,

Our church this day† keeps a high and solemn festival. Two hundred years have elapsed since eight individuals, including the pastor and teacher, signed the original covenant,‡ by which they entered into "church-state," and became an independent ecclesiastical body in this place. From so small a beginning have we grown to our present numbers and prosperity.

* See Appendix T. † See Appendix A. ‡ See Appendix B.

Dark indeed were the prospects of our pious fathers, in this and in all the other plantations of the Colony. A wilderness to subdue; a bleak climate to endure; savage enemies to watch and resist; disguised foes of their own nation following their steps, and misrepresenting their acts and motives to the tyrants, civil and spiritual, whom they had fled from; the venerable cathedrals and churches of England exchanged for poor meeting-houses with walls of mud and roofs of thatch: all the comforts which their homes had afforded, all the tender attachments which held them to their fathers' roofs and graves, and above all, the moral associations which had grown up in their souls, in connexion with the localities, the scenes, the institutions and customs of their place of birth, and which constituted their inner, spiritual life; — all to be forgone, and in their stead to be substituted pinching want, wasting sickness, a strange land, as yet unconsecrated to their affections by sweet memories or solemn suggestions. Such were some of the discouraging, appalling circumstances that met and surrounded our Pilgrim forefathers.* And the question naturally rises in the mind, and with this question all the instruction, and interest of the present occasion are connected, what principle was strong enough to nerve their spirits, and to sustain their spirits, in the arduous work, the almost hopeless enterprise, which they had undertaken? The true answer to this question will be furnished in the sketch I am to offer you, this day, of the history of our church.

* Many only reached this Western world to die here: or, as Cotton Mather expresses it, and for so sweet a sentence one can forgive much absurdity in that singular writer, "Many took New-England in their way to Heaven."

There lay in the capacious minds of our fathers a great and noble design, — to rear a Christian commonwealth in "these ends of the earth." Great designs always impart strength to the mind that entertains them. But besides the conception of a noble purpose, which is like a grand picture before the imagination, those who are wise as well as enterprising settle beforehand the chances of success; and their courage and perseverance grow out of the likelihood of a favorable issue. But what strengthened our fathers, and encouraged them to proceed with the attempt to realize their sublime conception of a Christian commonwealth in the wilderness? Were there any rational grounds upon which they might raise a calculation of success? Certainly none. Had they stopped to make calculations, there would have been no New-England. The conception of a Christian commonwealth might have existed, across the Atlantic, in the minds of a few musing men, and would have died with them, never being realized in history. The question, therefore, recurs again; What supported our ancestors? For history informs us that their conception became reality; and the institutions that surround us, the life, social, civil, and religious, which we live from day to day, are so many evidences and monuments of the great reality. What supported them? The answer is, religious belief; trust in God. This was the principle upon which their enterprise was based. The sentiment that sustained them is beautifully expressed in the words of the Anthem with which the solemnities of this occasion commenced;

"Watchman! tell us of the night;
What its signs of promise are.

Traveller! o'er yon mountain's height
See that glory-beaming star!

"Watchman! does its beauteous ray
Aught of hope or joy foretell?
Traveller! yes; it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.

"Watchman! will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveller! ages are its own;
See! it bursts o'er all the earth."

There are two interesting thoughts which occur to the mind, as we enter upon our subject. One of these is, that there is not a region on the face of the earth, that has not a religious history. That history may not, perhaps, be written. But there is no place that does not furnish materials for such a history, and few, if any, parts of the globe that do not present some monuments, to testify, more significantly and impressively than written signs or uttered syllables can ever do, to the religious thoughts, and affections, and hopes, and fears, that formerly inhabited the minds, and moved the souls of human believers and worshippers. Nor is this thought justly entertained, and fully understood, when we compress it into the proposition that the religious principle is universal. The important truth we are considering makes a livelier impression upon the mind, when we divide it into particulars, and reflect that there is, almost literally speaking, not a spot on the globe, be it mountain or plain, desert or cultivated region, rock or river or forest, that has not, in one period or another of the world's history, been set apart and held in peculiar sanctity, as a place of prayer or of devout meditation, by some family, tribe, or people, among the unnumbered generations that have, in past ages, pos-

sessed the earth. And thus the race, as a whole, have accomplished what individuals could not, — have made the "great globe which we inhabit" an altar to the God who made it, and have realized, in their united experience, the momentous truth, which every individual is taught in the abstract, as an essential doctrine of religion, but which the whole species alone can verify, — that the invisible object of human adoration is everywhere present.

Another thought naturally suggested, as we enter upon our subject, and which is kindred to the one just presented, is this ; — that Religion has been the source and motive of the greatest enterprises man has ever achieved ; and the origin of the most permanent monuments that human genius has been able to construct. Religion, we have reason to believe, built the Pyramids, those gigantic specimens of ancient art. And the temples, the fragments of whose beauty are strewed over the plains and hills of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, bear testimony to the depth of the sentiment which they were reared to express. It was the religious sentiment, stimulating the imagination of an Angelo and a Raphael, that produced the master-work of modern architecture, the church of St. Peter ; and gave rise to those conceptions of awful majesty and divine loveliness, which were expanded and embodied in the painter's representation of the Last Judgment, and of the Madonna. It was religion which inspired the muse of the Puritan Milton, and called into immortal being the noblest creation in literature, the Paradise Lost.

Or, to select a few from among the greatest enterprises achieved by mortals. It was religion which prompted and effected the Exodus of the Israelites out

of Egypt, kept them together until they were settled in the Promised Land, and their institutions were cemented into that ancient and venerable civilization, whose central principle, conspicuous amidst surrounding darkness and prevailing idolatries, was the belief and worship of one invisible Jehovah. Or to descend from this instance, in which the sentiment was, as we believe, strengthened by miraculous occurrences. The Crusades, the discovery of America by Columbus, and the planting of permanent settlements on these shores, were all results of religion, and are all illustrations of this crowning sentiment in the human soul.

Nor was the American continent an exception to the remarks that have been made, respecting the universality of the religious sentiment. Before our pious ancestors brought out from Christian England to these shores the religion of the Bible, there was a faith and a worship, imperfect and unenlightened, it is true, living in the breasts of the savages that roamed through the forests of the West. And the red men who owned the authority of the Sachem of Naponset,* in these Massachusetts fields, had some ideas, although faint, when compared with those which our divine religion unfolds, on spiritual subjects; some elevating notions of what is "unseen and eternal;" some forms of worship to give expression to religious sentiments; and some code of moral maxims and rules, based upon spiritual sanctions, and extending to the actions of daily life.

* "The tradition is — that this Sachem (Chickatabut) had his principal seat upon a small hill or rising upland, in the midst of a body of saltmarsh, in the township of Dorchester (now Quincy) near to a place called Squantum; and it is known by the name of Massachusetts Hill, or Mount Massachusetts, to this day." See Hutchinson's Mass., Vol. I. p. 408.

It may be well, as a farther introduction of our subject, to advert to the chief causes that induced our fathers to forsake their native land, and to seek a retreat in these distant regions.

The same causes, that moved Luther in Germany to undertake the great work of Reformation, soon became active in England, the land of our ancestors. The corruptions of Popery had long before been manifest to the minds of individuals, who had given expression to their indignant convictions, but had died without seeing the hope of their souls fulfilled. At length political causes conspired with religious convictions, and in the reign of Henry VIII. the ball of Reformation was set in motion in England. Under Edward the cause made considerable and cheering progress, and the hopes of many were elated with glorious prospects of success, which were checked and turned into sadness and tears, when the intolerant Mary succeeded to the throne. To avoid the certain fate which awaited them at home, multitudes of conscientious and pious Protestants went into exile, and established churches, where they could worship in freedom, on the continent of Europe, particularly in Holland and Germany. Elizabeth succeeded to the cruel Mary, and the exiled pastors, with their devoted flocks, returned into England, with high but delusive expectations of what they would enjoy under her reign. Elizabeth discountenanced Popery, it is true ; but she was tenacious of her own church, whose ceremonies and ritual, the relics of the old hierarchy, she was determined should be held in respect. In this state of things, the sect of the Puritans, to which our fathers belonged, whose leading principle was thorough reform, both in the doctrines and in the ob-

servances of the church, and the materials of which sect had been accumulating for a long time, became consolidated. The opposition of the Puritans had been at first aimed against the ceremonies, which, to their minds, savored too much of the old church. The "canonical habits" were made by the Queen essential to the exercise of the ministerial functions, and opposition to these became henceforth a virtue, and was the rallying-point of the Puritans. This led to meetings for worship in private houses, a circumstance which exposed them to the jealousy and persecutions of the government. As their sufferings increased, their attachment to their principles was strengthened, and they soon began to question the doctrines also of the English Church. During Elizabeth's reign a fourth part, at least, of the preachers in England were suspended. In 1583, she established the Court of High Commission, and conferred upon this court the dangerous power to punish at their discretion. James I. succeeded to the throne in 1603, and the severities against the Puritans were continued. By 1604 three hundred of the clergy were either silenced, or excommunicated, or cast into prison, or forced to leave their country. Holland, the land of Grotius and Arminius, must ever be held in honor by us, for furnishing a safe temporary asylum to our exiled fathers. Thither John Robinson, with his church, went in 1608, and there they lived together, until, in 1620, they removed, with the hope that their pastor would soon follow, and began the first settlement in New England at Plymouth. Under Charles I. the tyrannical measures were continued, and the abhorrence entertained by the Puritans for bishops, and whatever belonged to the hierarchy, be-

came deeper and deeper. Part of this antagonist feeling expended itself in colonizing America, and the remainder was left to grow at home, until at length it burst out in a civil war, and from a monarchy changed the English government into a commonwealth under Cromwell.

Governor Winthrop's company came over in 1630. It seems to have been their original intention* to have settled, with the fifteen hundred persons composing their colony, in some one place, and to have given it the name of Boston. But several circumstances, after their arrival, prevented this design being effected. Necessity, arising from sickness, exhaustion, and the wish to be settled before the coming on of winter, influenced them to disperse about in separate companies, and to commence distinct plantations, in places that appeared most convenient and promising. Hence the origin of the system of towns in New England, a system which has done much to favor the democratic element, which enters so largely into all our institutions. Hence arose Charlestown, Dorchester, Boston, and in course of time Braintree.

In order to assist the mind to embrace, in one connected view, the numerous events, which extend over a space of two hundred years, it may not be amiss here to make a division into periods, marked and determined by the most important and interesting occurrences that have taken place in the history of this place.

It is familiarly known, that as early as 1625 a company, of which one Captain Wollaston was the head, came here, with the intention of making a permanent

* See Gov. Dudley's Letter to the Countess of Lincoln.

settlement. And from him the place received the name of Mount Wollaston, which it bore for a space of fifteen years, until in 1640, May 13, (old style,) the place became a distinct town, by the name of Braintree. So early as 1625 only one permanent settlement, that at Plymouth, had been made in New England. An attempt to make one a little to the south of us, at Wessagussett, (now Weymouth,) had failed, and the members of that company had been scattered. Wollaston, after remaining here but a short time, removed south to Virginia, leaving, however, the greater part of his company, some of whom may have continued here, and mingled with the subsequent settlers; on which supposition is founded the claim which has been made for this place, as the oldest* permanent settlement in the Massachusetts colony. As the purposes of Wollaston were mercantile and not religious, and especially as those he left behind fell into great dissoluteness, and gave much annoyance, and caused great scandal to their peaceful and pious neighbors, until decisive measures were taken to punish their instigator, one Morton, it will not be to my present purpose, which is to give a sketch of the religious history of the place, to bestow further attention upon them.

The earliest incident, of an ecclesiastical character, connected with this place, is the circumstance mentioned by Governor Winthrop in his Journal, under date of Aug. 14, 1632, namely, "The Braintree company (which had begun to sit down at Mount Wollaston) by order of court removed to Newtown. These were Mr. Hooker's company." To them is to be traced the name†

* See Appendix C.

† See Appendix C.

given to this town, when it was incorporated. This company had been but a short time in the country, and their continuance at Mount Wollaston was very brief. Cotton Mather, in his account of Rev. Thomas Hooker, remarks that his friends "came over the year before (he came) to prepare for his reception." And we learn from Winthrop's Journal,* that Mr. Hooker arrived, September 4, 1633. They remained, therefore, at Mount Wollaston, before their removal to Newtown, at most but a few months. With the exception of the single incident just mentioned, nothing of an ecclesiastical character is known in the history of this place previous to 1634, so that the first period of our church history may be reckoned from 1634, when by order of the General Court Mount Wollaston was annexed to Boston, to 1639, the year when a distinct church was gathered here.

The second period may extend from 1639, Sept. 17, O. S., the date of the gathering of this church, to 1708, Nov. 3, when the town of Braintree was, by a vote, confirmed by the General Court two days after, divided into two separate precincts; the north precinct comprising what is now Quincy, and the south including what is now Braintree and Randolph.

The third period may extend from 1708 to 1792, when the north precinct of the old town of Braintree was set off and became an independent town, by the name of Quincy.

The next period may extend from 1792 to 1824, when the town and parochial concerns were finally separated, and the parish of the Congregational Society in Quincy was organized.

* Vol. I. p. 108.

With regard to the first of the periods just named, we must have recourse for information to the records of the First Church, Boston, and to books that treat of the general history of the colony at that early time.

In the second period, comprising nearly seventy years, the affairs of the church were blended with town affairs, and scanty notices of church matters are accordingly found in the Braintree town records, the earliest date in which records is 10th day of 5th month 1640, which was only about two months after the town was incorporated.

From 1708 to 1792, that is, for a period of eighty-four years, this was a separate precinct, having a precinct clerk; and two books, comprising the whole period, are preserved in good condition, which contain quite particular information respecting the affairs of the society, during the ministries of Mr. Marsh, Mr. Hancock, Mr. Briant, and part of the ministry of Mr. Wibird.

From 1792 to 1824, parish and town affairs were once more blended, and the records of the town must be consulted to gain what information is desired.

The church records consist of two books; but the oldest goes back no farther than to the commencement of Mr. Fiske's pastorate in 1672. Nothing is now left in the hand-writing of either Tompson or Flynt, the first pastor and teacher, although Mr. Hancock, in one of his century sermons, refers to a record, which he possessed, in the hand-writing of Mr. Flynt.

To begin with the first period. From 1634, Sept. 3, when Mount Wollaston was ordered by the General Court to be annexed to Boston, until 1636, those persons to whom grants of land in this place had, from

time to time, been made, were obliged to go to worship on the Sabbath at Boston. This was found to be very inconvenient, and accordingly the residents at the Mount, among whom "were many poor men having lots assigned them there, and not able to use those lands and dwell still in Boston, petitioned the town, first, to have a minister there, and after, to have leave to gather a church there."* This request was reluctantly granted; and the reason assigned for the reluctance was, that so many chief men would be removed from Boston to the injury of the church there. The matter was, however, finally compounded, by taxing the lands held here a certain rate, to be paid into the treasury of the town of Boston. The first petition of the residents at the Mount, that they might have a separate minister, was granted as early as 1636. The vote of Boston first church, granting permission to Mr. Wheelwright to preach at Mount Wollaston, seems to have been the result at which they arrived, after several meetings, and much discussion as to whether Mr. Wheelwright should be associated in the ministry with Wilson and Cotton, over the first church. This appears to have been the wish of some. Mr. Cotton, however, raised some objections to the proposal; and Mr. Cotton's objections were not likely to be resisted; so the matter was compounded again, by permitting Mr. Wheelwright† to minister at the Mount.

In a book,‡ entitled "Plaine Dealing or Newes from New England," written by one Lechford, and printed in 1642, the author, who wrote with a view to check the current that was setting against Episcopacy, and in

* See Winthrop's N. E. † See Appendix D. ‡ See Mass. Hist. Coll.

favor of the Puritans, speaks of the meetings for worship at Mount Wollaston and other places similarly situated, under the name of "chapels of ease." This high sounding Episcopal appellation would, most likely, have excited in the minds of our Puritan fathers a feeling exactly opposite to what it occasions in us. To use a more simple phrase, this was a branch of the Boston first church; and according to the writer just quoted, before an independent church was gathered in this place, "they of the Mount" came and received the sacrament at Boston; "and (he further adds) some of Braintree still receive at Boston."

And here a word may be said of the ministers (or *elders*, as ministers were called in early times) of the Boston church. The Pastor was the excellent John Wilson, one of the earliest Pilgrims. He came out to this country with Gov. Winthrop's company in 1630, and was elected and ordained pastor of the first church soon after their arrival. He survived two that were successively associated with him in the ministry, and died in the year 1667, at the age of 78 years. He seems to have been universally beloved and venerated in the colony. We have an interest in him, not merely as the first pastor of this church, when it was, if not a "chapel of ease," yet a branch of Boston first church; but he had a large grant of land in the north part of this town early made to him by the town of Boston, for a convenient farm. Associated with Mr. Wilson, as teacher of the first church, was the famous John Cotton, a distinguished Puritan preacher from Boston in England. He was a great light in early times. His opinions were looked upon as law, and he is spoken of by the historians of the period, as doing

more than any other individual to fix the principles of Congregationalism, and to mould into the form, which they have in the main preserved to this day, our ecclesiastical institutions and observances.

Mr. Wheelwright ministered at the Mount until 1637, Nov. 1, when he was disfranchised, and banished from the Massachusetts jurisdiction, on account of a sermon preached by him, which was judged to be seditious in its character. This sermon grew out of the Antinomian controversy, as it was called, which raged at that period in Boston, and, strange as it may seem to us, which threw the whole community, political as well as religious, into a ferment. This theological controversy was commenced by Mrs. Hutchinson,* a woman of great talent, who established meetings in her own house, at which the sermons of the preceding Sabbath were freely criticised, and theological matters generally were discussed. Mr. Wheelwright was brother-in-law to this lady, and became a powerful advocate of her views. The result of the opinions which they advanced was, that the whole community was divided between those who, in theological phrase, were said to be under a covenant of *works*, and those who were under a covenant of *grace*. On the one side Mrs. Hutchinson and her friends charged the ministers of that day, with few exceptions, with preaching up works, duties, outward morality, to the neglect of that free grace, which is set forth in the Gospel as the ground of human salvation. The charge brought by the other party against the new sect was, that faith, the spiritual frames which religion requires were insisted on, as men's sole reliance,

* See Appendix E.

while the duties of life were undervalued and represented as having no connexion with salvation; thus a way being opened for all sorts of licentiousness. Upon this ground the name was given to the new sect, of Antinomians, that is, enemies to the moral law.

It is not my intention to go into a minute examination of the opinions held by those who were styled Antinomians. But as two of the principal members of Mrs. Hutchinson's party, John Wheelwright and William Coddington,* had estates here; one of them being, as we have seen, the first preacher at the Mount, and the other an honored name in our colonial history, and in the history of the neighboring colony of Rhode Island, of which he was the father, after he had been driven away from Massachusetts during the controversy just spoken of, it has not seemed to me proper to pass over the subject, although the difficulty of making it intelligible, by reason of the subtle metaphysical distinctions involved in it, and the peculiar technical phraseology in which the new notions were conveyed, is somewhat embarrassing. Perhaps, therefore, I cannot do better than to state, in my own language, the ideas I have formed respecting this controversy, the main point upon which it turned, and the leading principle and aim of the new sect.

The name Antinomians, it will be remembered, was given them by their opponents. They rejected it, as well as the inferences drawn by the other party from their main doctrine. So far from attaching no importance, as the name implies, to good works, to the practical parts of religion, they insisted upon their impor-

* See Appendix F.

tance most earnestly in their preaching; — whether this was consistent, logically considered, with their assumed principles or not; — and as for the lives and characters of the chief advocates of the new doctrine, it is sufficient to remind you that Wheelwright was, through a long life, esteemed and respected as one of the best of men; Coddington's name is revered in connexion with the history of a neighboring colony and state; and Henry Vane,* once governor of Massachusetts, and a cordial friend and supporter of the heresiarch of Mount Wollaston, went home to England; bore a conspicuous part in the revolutionary scenes that rocked that kingdom to its centre; was the steadfast and consistent advocate of freedom and the rights of man; and finally gave the strongest possible practical refutation of the charge of Antinomianism, in the serene fortitude and Christian magnanimity, with which he closed a virtuous life upon the scaffold.

This subject is the more appropriate to the present occasion, because the sermon, which occasioned Mr. Wheelwright's banishment from the Massachusetts colony, was preached, as I suppose, in this place. It was delivered on a fast day, which had been appointed for January 20, 1636 – 7, with reference to the dissensions that had sprung out of the new tenets, about three months after Mr. Wheelwright had received permission from the first church to come out and preach to the people at the Mount.

The text of this sermon is taken from Matt. ix. 15. "And Jesus said unto them, can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is

* See Appendix. G.

with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." The preacher opens the subject, suggested by these words, with asking, what is the true occasion of a fast? When ought Christians to fast? The answer, which he expands, is given in the text; "when the bridegroom shall be taken from them;" when Christ is removed. This leads to another question, what is it to remove Christ? And the answer to this carries him and his reader into the heart of his doctrine, namely, Christ is removed, in a spiritual sense, in the only sense in which he can be, since his death, whenever the peculiar doctrine of Christianity, justification by grace, by faith, is taken away, and a covenant of works, a mere code of moral rules for regulating the behavior, without any inward exercise of the spiritual principle, is substituted instead. That he was anxious to guard the doctrine from abuses into which those, who received it not aright, might easily be led, appears from his exhorting his hearers thus: "Let us have a care that we do show ourselves holy in all manner of good conversation, both in private and public, and in all our carriages and conversations; let us have a care to endeavor to be holy as the Lord is; let us not give occasion to those that are coming on, or manifestly opposite to the ways of grace, to suspect the way of grace; let us carry ourselves that they may be ashamed to blame us; let us deal uprightly with those with whom we have occasion to deal; and have a care to guide our families, and to perform duties that belong to us; and let us have a care that we give not occasion to others to say we are libertines or Antinomians."

This certainly does not look like enmity to virtue or a disposition to disparage good works. In the conclusion of the discourse the preacher applies his doctrine to the comfort of himself and his hearers, in case a certain calamity should befal them, which in fact did befal them eventually, in the following remarkable passage; "Suppose those that are God's children should lose their houses, and lands, and wives, and friends, and lose the acting of the gift of grace, and lose the ordinances, yet they can never lose the Lord Jesus Christ; this is a great comfort to God's people. Suppose the saints of God should be banished, deprived of all the ordinances of God, that were a hard case, in some respects; but if the ordinances be taken away, Christ cannot; for if John be banished into an island, the spirit comes upon him on the Lord's day. There is amend for the ordinances, amend for banishment, if we lose the ordinances; for God he will be ordinances to us."

The passage last quoted illustrates the temper and aim of this celebrated discourse. "If we lose the ordinances, God he will be ordinances to us." This sentence contains the highest form of spiritualism. But this could not be acceptable at a period, when religion was so identified with the ordinances, faith with its symbols, and worship with usages, that whenever the latter were removed or neglected, the former were thought to be destroyed. Our fathers were remarkable for the most punctilious reverence for the established modes of expressing and cultivating the religion of the soul. They knew not, therefore, how to tolerate the sentiments of Mr. Wheelwright. The sermon, which advanced such sentiments, would be accounted bold in any

age. In the age when the preacher lived, it was considered an affront to the civil authorities, and was pronounced, by the highest tribunal known in the colony, seditious. And the author was accordingly banished.

But if we regard the circumstances of those times, the motives which brought our fathers into these distant parts of the earth, and the state generally of the religious world, we shall not, I think, fail to perceive that the Antinomian controversy grew very naturally out of those circumstances. The Puritan settlers of New England had left their native land, and had with difficulty made for themselves "a lodge in the vast wilderness." Beneath forests which had never known the woodman's axe, but had been left to fulfil their centennial life, if perchance the "strong wind" of God allowed them to waste by slow decay, and resolve themselves into their original dust; among rocks which had never echoed the strokes of man's art, which has since forced its way, through those granite gates, to the secret chambers of the earth, and brought out hidden treasures for the reward of industry; — into the midst of such desolate scenes had our pilgrim fathers come to seek a retreat, where they might enjoy, undisturbed, their faith, and a field on whose virgin soil they might scatter the seed of new institutions in church and in state. They had in fact, although not professedly, perhaps not with a clear and full consciousness of their true position, but in fact, they had separated themselves from the Church of England; their mother church in whose bosom they had been nourished, and to which they could not but look back with fond and yearning hearts,*

* See the touching and beautiful address, at parting, of the Governor and company of the Massachusetts colony, to their brethren in and of the Church

"ever acknowledging that such hope and part as they had obtained in the common salvation, they had received in her bosom, and sucked it from her breasts," and expressing the wish, "that their heads and hearts may be fountains of tears for the everlasting welfare of their English brethren, when they should be in their poor cottages in the wilderness." All this was natural, and was, doubtless, as sincerely felt, as it was beautifully expressed. But they had, in fact, cut themselves off from the institutions, civil and religious, of their native country. An ocean rolled between them and those institutions. They were subjected to new influences. The customs and modes of thinking, which had formerly surrounded them, and which had swayed, with a subtle and imperceptible influence, their daily and hourly life, were now absent. They were Puritans, and if true to the principle indicated by the name of their sect, they could not adopt the old formulas of thought, the old modes of worship, the old ceremonies and institutions, which, in their view, were all corrupt and needed reform. They must, therefore, in a great measure, commence anew. And they had no pattern to work by in church or state, except what was furnished in the Scriptures, or such as their own ingenuity could devise. Mr. Wheelwright preached at this place, and the Antinomian controversy raged, soon after the commencement of the colony, when as yet everything was an experiment; before the minds of men had melted together into a firm mass, under the influence of common principles of belief, and established institutions. It was a

of England, signed by Winthrop, Coddington, and others, on board the Arbella, April 7, 1630.

transition period in society. Individual minds had been freed from the restraints of universally acknowledged principles, and set to work fervently, each one for itself; each one teeming with thoughts and projects, and seeking, in his own way and according to his measure, to realize the idea for which all had come out from the beaten paths and cleared regions of civilized life to the unbroken stillness and rude spaces of a new world. For these reasons the time of the Antinomian controversy is, to the philosophical reader, one of the most interesting periods in the history of our country. Under that hard theological phraseology, which to many, doubtless, proves "a stumbling-block, and a rock of offence," there may be traced the working of great principles * in religion and politics, which were, even at so early a period, struggling to express themselves, and to take shape, and which have since been unfolded, and have already resulted in consequences most momentous to us and to our posterity.

In fact the whole controversy was a struggle, in which were asserted anew the rights of the spiritual principle in man's nature. *Faith* and *works*, in theological language, are terms that correspond to two different forms of character, founded either upon personal conviction, or upon servile imitation; a mere conformity to customs and established ways of thinking, on the one side, or an independent sense of right and duty in the soul, on the other side. This is the ground upon which the

* In the discussions, that grew out of Antinomianism, the principles of religious liberty are said to have been evolved and clearly stated, by Henry Vane; to whom therefore has been awarded the high honor of being the earliest champion of civil and religious freedom. — See *Upham's Life of Vane.*

battles of successive systems of religion and philosophy have been fought age after age, and we may presume that it will continue to be so. Go back as far as the most ancient historical documents, the Scriptures, will carry you, and you find the contest ever to have been between the spiritual principle in man's soul, and mere blind, unquestioning, mechanical conformity to usages and institutions, an irrational cleaving to institutions, long after the breath of life has gone from them, and when they are only fit to be buried out of sight.

Take, for illustration, the very first sacrifices of which any account has been preserved. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." In the brief notice which the old Scriptures give us of that early transaction, the particular reasons are not assigned for the favor which was shown to one of these brethren, whilst the service of the other was rejected. But we cannot hesitate for a moment to assign the true reason. One of those acts was performed simply because it was enjoined, and therefore not to be omitted, while the other was a voluntary expression of the soul of the worshipper. In either case the mere act was nothing, of no account, except as it served to express and give form to the sentiment within. If it was the soul's act it was accepted.

Again, — we come upon the case of Abraham. And for what is he remarkable? With what quality is his name ever associated? Faith, — he is the "father of the faithful." From a country of idolaters, and a generation of superstitious imitators, this noble non-conform-

ist, this first of religious pilgrims, this earliest assertor of the rights of man's spiritual nature, came forth, at the divine call, from the home of his brethren and fathers, and "sojourned in a strange land." It was to vindicate the rights of conscience; to seek for a place, no matter how desolate its natural aspect, no matter how little it might bear of old familiar resemblances, where the most sacred sentiment in man's soul might have liberty to expand, and to take what shape, and to speak in what tones it might choose.

Once more,—carry your thoughts forward many years from the time of Abraham. The Israelites, his descendants, have increased to a vast host; have been brought out from Egypt under the conduct of Moses, and have been settled in the promised land; that land which the faith of their pilgrim father, Abraham, had led him to take possession of long before. The law has been given from Sinai. The civil and religious polity of the nation has been established. Institutions have grown up, and generation after generation has been born and educated, and their characters formed under these institutions. And in proportion to the punctilious respect and veneration, paid by the Israelites to their national institutions, is their want of faith, their entire lack of soul-religion. In this state of Jewish society appeared the company of the prophets, the inspired vindicators of a spiritual religion, the great reformers, not so much of the abstract truths held by the national intellect, as of the spirit of the national worship, and the principles of the national morality. They were, in the midst of a generation of formalists, the spiritualists of their age. They taught, O with what words of scorching rebuke and inspiring eloquence, the

great lesson which their contemporaries most needed, and which they were so slow to understand, that institutions have no life, except what is breathed into them from the fervent and devout soul of the worshipper; that the sacrifices which they laid upon their altars were but a cruel mockery, and the mitred and stoled priest was officiating in a vain show, unless those sacrifices were the sincere expression of humble and grateful hearts, and the priest was a mouth to the congregation, to give utterance to their faith and piety.

Advance forward still farther in the train of the ages, and you come to the most important era in the history of our race, the birth of the Saviour, and the introduction of his religion into the world. And what is the leading, the vital principle of this divine religion? Its great peculiarity consists in the vindication it so triumphantly makes of the spiritual principle in man. It is a soul-religion, not only as distinguished from forms and rites, but also and still more, as distinguished from a decent exterior, from a mere prudential conformity of the life to traditions and usages. It seeks to regenerate man; and this regeneration can only be effected by penetrating, as it does, with its light into the mind, and with its purity into the heart, and by setting up its kingdom within. The very first controversies, which this divine religion gave rise to, were conducted by the great Apostle of the Gentiles with the Judaizing Christians (as they were called) who still clung to what the apostle, in his strong, emphatic language, called the "beggarly elements" of morals and religion. And it was the exposition of that primitive interpreter of the Gospel of Jesus, which settled the foundation principle of our religion to be faith, or conviction in the soul. It

was in the midst of such controversies that our religion had its birth, and by the divine strength of this principle achieved its earliest triumphs.

Nor have the illustrations of the great principle we are considering been exhausted. Go forward with me, Christian hearers, once more; follow the course of our religion from the time when it lay in the manger at Bethlehem, worshipped in its germ and promise by the wise of the earth, through the controversies which it held with the schools of philosophy, the persecutions which it met at the hand of power, the martyrdoms that crowned and glorified its meek confessors; until it was graciously received up, by imperial condescension, to sit by the side of the Cæsars, on the throne of the world. From that day Satan triumphed, for a season, over Christ. The church was indeed exalted in human estimation. But its locks of strength were shorn off, as it lay sleeping through the night of centuries, in the harlot lap of worldly prosperity. Follow on, in imagination, until we reach the time, and a world-era that time is, of Martin Luther, that great man; great, not by reason of any offices he bore, or of inherited dominion, but great in the power of simple, unadorned Christian manhood. When he stood up to confront kings, with almost every hand and heart in Christendom against him, what was the instrument which he wielded with so much success? What was the word he uttered, that went with so much power to the souls of men? What, in fine, was the principle of the reformation? "Justification by faith." This was the doctrine, this the principle, that gave him the victory over the mightiest spiritual tyranny that has ever oppressed humanity. The Reformation was a re-vindication of the rights of the

soul. Religion had been reduced to a succession of outward observances, in which was mingled no faith. Slavish submission to authority, and the mechanical, superstitious performance of outward acts, without any reference to thought, sentiment, or principle, constituted the religion of the Christian world. It was by the principle of faith, by setting forth anew the spiritual character of the Gospel, that Luther accomplished his gigantic, and to worldly calculations, hopeless work. The works, to which, under the corrupt system of Popery, men had been taught to attach ideas of merit, were of no real, intrinsic worth. The only god that men realized was the Pope; the only law they feared the canons of the church; and their only morality consisted in conformity to superstitious usages and arbitrary appointments. The principle on which Luther depended, and which in fact insured his success, and which in theological phraseology was termed *Justification by faith*, went to base character upon the only sure foundation, a spiritual principle in the soul; it broke up the reverence which had been superstitiously bestowed upon human authority; it set the human mind at liberty from the bondage in which it had been held so long; it brought out the worth of the individual, and laid the foundation of the high civilization, freedom, and prosperity of Protestant Christendom.

The Puritans were the fruit which the Reformation produced in England. Their principle was to "carry out the work of the Reformation;" to purify Christianity yet more from the corruptions which had adhered to it in the course of ages. The noble sentiment of Robinson, the father of Plymouth church, was "that more light, as he was verily assured, would yet break

forth from God's word;" and however he might reverence such men as Luther and Calvin, he would not yet stop where they had finished, but would go on wherever the guiding star of God's truth should lead the inquiring mind. It was not, therefore, strange that, under such circumstances, the Antinomian controversy should have sprung up. It was not set in motion by vulgar, ignorant fanatics, the licentiousness of whose practice gave a bad odor to their high-toned sentiments. It was promoted by such men as Vane and Coddington. The most ample and honorable testimony was uniformly borne, even by those who differed from him in sentiment, to the abilities and worth of Mr. Wheelwright. Mrs. Hutchinson, who bore a leading part in the excitement of the times, was acknowledged on all sides to be a woman of uncommon powers. And even Mr. Cotton, the gifted teacher of Boston First Church, had too much sympathy with the new sentiments, to lose his respect for those who had urged those sentiments too boldly. The whole controversy was founded in an attempt to give new vitality and spirituality to the religion of the times; to resist the tendency, which is ever at work, to rely too much upon the outward manifestations of religious principle, to the neglect of the principle itself in the soul. Undoubtedly this attempt ran into extravagances of sentiment and conduct. But still the attempt was the same in kind, and had the same object, as in former times the many instances we have considered; — and the remark, therefore, may be repeated, which has already been made, that the struggle always has been, and we may presume, always will continue to be, between faith and works; between the principle of religion in the soul, and the manifestation

of it in conduct; between the sentiment of worship, and the institutions which are established to nourish and to express that sentiment; between the living spirit of faith and piety, and dead mechanical conformity to fixed usages and forms. Where faith is exclusively cultivated, religion easily degenerates into enthusiasm, and unwise, unprofitable zeal. And on the other hand, where too much stress is laid upon traditions and usages and outward morality, to the neglect of faith, or the principle of religion in the soul, hypocrisy and formality assume the place of true righteousness, which is briefly described by our Saviour as consisting in love to God and love to man.

But the length to which this discourse has been already extended admonishes me to relieve your patience. I have brought you, my hearers, no farther forward than 1639, Sept 17, (Old Style) the date of the gathering of a distinct, independent church at Mount Wollaston. Our attention has been confined to the brief, but interesting period which preceded the day whose Two Hundredth Anniversary we this day welcome. And here for the present I will close my remarks, where many of my hearers probably expected I should begin.

But we are brought, in conclusion, to the very point of time, about which the interesting associations of the present occasion cluster. Two hundred years! how much do those words contain and suggest! What an amount of blessings, civil, political, and religious, accumulated by the wisdom, the experience, and the virtue of two centuries, through the labors, the tears, the prayers, and the sacrifices of our fathers, crowns the present hour! How dependent are we, for all that we most prize, upon those who have lived, and thought,

and purposed, and struggled before us! How insignificant is the best that the individual man can effect! How has God ordained that the highest good we can possess on earth shall be inherited good, the aggregate result of the knowledge and virtues of generation after generation! How are we brought back to the solemn admonition of the text:

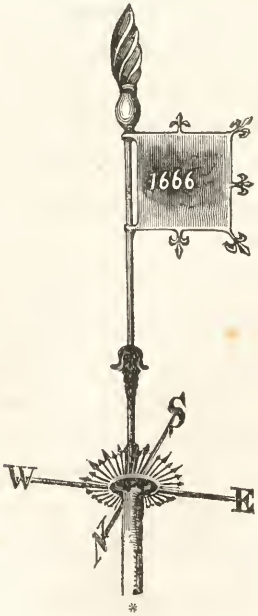
"Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God:

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God."



* See Appendix T.

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DISCOURSE II.

St. John iv. 20.

OUR FATHERS WORSHIPPED IN THIS MOUNTAIN.

In the former part of the day, we brought forward the ecclesiastical history of this place to the time when a distinct independent church was gathered at Mount Wollaston. Our fathers had "worshipped in this mountain," as we have seen, some few years before the time from which we date the origin of our church. Those years, though few in number, were years of great interest. The individual who preached here, and several of those who adopted his sentiments, were distinguished for talents and worth, and are known in the history of the world.

* See Appendix T.

In the Journal of Gov. Winthrop, under date of September 17, 1639, the origin of this church is thus mentioned: "Mount Wollaston had been formerly laid to Boston; but many poor men having lots assigned them there, and not able to use those lands and dwell still in Boston, they petitioned the town first to have a minister there, and after to have leave to gather a church there, which the town at length (upon some small composition) gave way unto. So this day they gathered a church after the usual manner, and chose one Mr. Tompson, a very gracious, sincere man, and Mr. Flynt, a godly man also, their ministers."

Six members only whose names are subscribed to the covenant,* which is given in the first edition of Mr. Hancock's Century Discourses, together with the pastor and teacher, composed the small church gathered at this place. "Mr. Tompson was ordained eight days after the church was gathered, namely, September 24, 1639, and Mr. Flynt the 17th of March following." † This church was the fifteenth in order of time that was gathered in the Massachusetts colony. According to Mr. Hancock, the first deacons ‡ were Mr. Samuel Bass, who had been dismissed and recommended to them from the church in Roxbury, July 5, 1640; and Mr. Richard Brackett, who was ordained, July 21, 1642. In

* See Appendix B.

† So says Mr. Hancock. What his source of information was I cannot determine, unless it was the manuscript record in the hand-writing of Mr. Flynt, the first teacher of the church, which he mentions in one of his notes. Winthrop states that Mr. Tompson was ordained, November 19, 1639. See Appendix I. Mr. Hancock says too that the church was gathered, September 16; but the authority of Winthrop, who was contemporary with the occurrence, is to be preferred.

‡ See Appendix H.

addition to these two, I find in the Boston First Church Records, under date of 12th July, 1640, this entry; "Our brother Alexander Winchester, upon the desire of the church of Christ at Mount Wollaston, now called Braintree, is recommended and dismissed unto them for their help in the office of deacon."

Some uncertainty exists as to the precise time when Mr. Tompson* came over to this country. There was a Rev. William Tompson, probably the same person, member of the church of Dorchester in 1636. Previous to his settlement at Mount Wollaston, he had been very useful at Acomenticus (now York in the State of Maine). He had been in the exercise of the ministry before he left England, having been settled in Lancashire. In the year 1642, upon an application of sundry persons in Virginia, that ministers of the Congregational order might be sent out to them, Mr. Tompson was selected, with two others, to go on this mission. Their preaching seems to have made a good impression upon many; but the following year they were obliged to leave and return home, by reason of an order of the government of the Virginia colony, "that such as would not conform to the ceremonies of the Church of England should by such a day depart the country." While absent on this mission, Mr. Tompson's wife died; and in the first Book of Records of Roxbury Church is a notice of the event in the shape of verses, supposed to be addressed to the surviving husband by his deceased partner. Some of the verses are free from the conceits that entered so largely into the poetry of that day, and are marked by simplicity and

* See Appendix I.

natural expression of feeling. In 1645, Mr. Tompson was appointed to accompany the forces raised by the colonies, for the war at that time threatened by the Indians. It was intended that he should preach to the troops during the war; but the dangers that threatened the colony in that quarter were averted, and there was therefore no necessity for his absence from home. Mr. Tompson is spoken of, by those who have written of our early history, as a "powerful and successful preacher," and quite a pillar in these New England churches. He is also said to have been, in his day, an author of some repute; but nothing is mentioned respecting his writings, except that he composed certain prefaces for books written by others, none of which have I succeeded in discovering. He was constitutionally inclined to melancholy, which seems to have embittered a considerable portion of his life, and to have abridged his usefulness. He died, December 10th, 1666. In the Roxbury Church Records is the following notice, which adds a few particulars to our knowledge of him: "Mr. William Tompson, Pastor to the Church at Braintree, departed this life in the 69th year of his age. He had been held under the power of melancholy for the space of eight years. During which time he had divers lucid intervals and sweet revivings, especially the week before he died, in so much that he essayed to go to the church, and administer the Lord's Supper to them; but his body was so weak that he could neither go nor ride." Thus died the first pastor of this church. He was interred here, and a stone, bearing an inscription to his memory, is to be seen in our burying place.

Mr. Henry Flynt, who was associated with Mr. Tompson as teacher of the church, came to this country in

the year 1635, and his name is found that year among the members of the Boston First Church. He was ordained, 17th March, 1639–40, and died, April 27, 1668, having survived the pastor a little over one year. He was father to the Rev. Josiah Flynt, who was pastor of Dorchester church, and grandfather of Henry Flynt Esq., who is well known as having been a tutor in Harvard University "upwards of fifty-five years, and about sixty years a fellow of the corporation." The historian of the University remarks, that "most of the educated men in New England, during a considerable part of the last century, had been under the instruction of this remarkable tutor, or of those whom he taught." *

The first race of ministers in this church, those who had been born in England and who had exercised their ministry there, had now passed away; and their successors were all educated in this country. To the death of Mr. Flynt a period of nearly twenty-nine years had elapsed since the gathering of the church. A few months after the church was gathered, and the two first ministers were settled, namely, May 13th, 1640, the petition of those who resided at the Mount was granted, and they were incorporated as a town, according to the agreement made with the town of Boston. The name of the new town, Braintree, was, doubtless, derived from the Braintree company, already mentioned, which in 1632 had begun to sit down here, and removed hence to Newtown, afterwards Cambridge. This company came from Braintree, in Essex County, England. The celebrated Mr. Hooker, who the next year came over and joined them at Newtown, had been ther min-

* See Peirce's History of Harvard University.

ister before they left England. Among the names of that company, as given in the History of Cambridge,* several occur that are at the present day familiar in this vicinity. And in order to account for the name of Braintree † being given to this town, we may either adopt the suggestion, that has been made by high authority, that that company remained here and did not remove to Newtown ; or if we think the historical evidence conclusive for their removal, we may suppose that several of them returned hither, when a few years afterwards they of Newtown made complaint to the General Court for want of room, and when the great body of the company, together with their pastor, emigrated to Connecticut River, and laid the foundation of Hartford. It is certainly what we should expect, that some place among the new settlements should bear the name of a company, that had for their minister so celebrated a man as Hooker. And what place more likely to receive the appellation, than that which offered the first resting place to these Pilgrims, after their arrival in New England ?

It would gratify a very natural curiosity, could we know, more particularly than we do, the condition of the town and church here, during the twenty-nine years that elapsed between the gathering of the church and the death of the teacher. But the records of the town furnish only scanty materials, and no church records of that early period are known to be in existence. In one of the volumes of the Massachusetts Historical Collec-

* See Dr. Holmes's History of Cambridge, in Mass. Historical Collections.

† See Appendix C.

tions is a Report,* signed by three individuals, who were appointed by the General Court a committee, to inquire concerning the maintenance of the ministers of the churches in the county of Suffolk, to which county this town then belonged. They met at Braintree on the 22d of July, 1657, and collected the information they wished from the deacons of the neighboring churches. Of Braintree they made report, that they were informed by the deacons of Braintree, "that Mr. Flynt and Mr. Tompson are each of them allowed £55 per annum, paid generally in such things as themselves take up and accept of from the inhabitants; paid ordinarily yearly or within the year, the town being about 80 families, Mr. Tompson's family being three persons, Mr. Flynt's family being about seven or eight persons. These elders depend generally upon public contribution."

After the death of the pastor and teacher, the church here remained without any settled minister above four years.† There were unhappy divisions in the church, which seem to have occasioned great disturbances, and to have been a subject of concern to the neighboring churches. From a manuscript journal, with the use of which I have been favored, kept by the Rev. Josiah Flynt, son of the teacher of this church, some light is thrown upon the history of the interval. It appears from this manuscript, that Mr. Flynt preached to this church for some time, and, together with a Mr. Bulkley, actually received a call to settle, and that an offer was made of £60 per annum to each, besides certain privileges; but the divisions that rent the church

* See Appendix I. † See Appendix L.

into parties prevented any settlement, and Mr. Flynt soon after accepted a call to become pastor of the neighboring church of Dorchester.

At length Mr. Moses Fiske * was sent hither, by order of the County Court held at Boston, "to improve his labors," as the order expresses it, "in preaching the word at Braintree, until the church there agree and obtain supply for the work of the ministry, or this court take further order." Mr. Fiske accordingly came, and preached for the first time, December 3, 1671. His preaching appears to have been acceptable; for several of the brethren visited him the day after the Sabbath, and thanked him for his compliance with the order of the court; and on February 24th following, he received a unanimous call to settle in this place, which he accepted. He was ordained, September 11, 1672. With him our Church Records commence. In them it is recorded, that at his ordination Mr. Eliot prayed and gave the charge, Mr. Oxenbridge and the deacons joined in the laying on hands, Mr. Thacher of Boston gave the right hand of fellowship. It is not mentioned who preached on the occasion, but it is probable that Mr. Fiske preached himself, in conformity with a practice that prevailed at that early period in New England.

Mr. Fiske was the son of the Rev. John Fiske, who came from England before 1637, was a physician and minister, and was the first minister of Wenham and Chelmsford, in which latter place he died, 1677. His son Moses, the third minister of Braintree, was graduated at Harvard College in 1662. His ministry in this town was a long one, extending over thirty-six years,

* See Appendix M.

and he appears to have enjoyed and retained the affectionate respect of his flock. He died here, August 10, 1708; and his ashes repose beside his predecessors. He left a numerous family behind him. One of his sons, Samuel Fiske, was afterwards settled as minister of the first church in Salem. I do not find that Mr. Fiske published anything during his life. He preached the sermon before the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, in the year 1694; the manuscript of which sermon is in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

It may be mentioned as a fact honorable to the disposition of the inhabitants of this town, during the period we have just been passing over, and some indication too of the growth of the place, that among the contributions made in various places, for the erection of a new edifice for the college at Cambridge, which edifice was completed in 1677, the town of Braintree furnished the sum of £87 14s. 6d., there being only four towns in the colony that contributed a larger sum for the same purpose.

From a manuscript Diary * kept by a Mr. Fairfield, an intelligent mechanic, who resided in this town during part of the ministry of Mr. Fiske, I have selected a notice of this minister, which is the more valuable as a testimony to his good qualities from the fact, that it was inserted in a private diary, kept by a humble individual, and was not meant to be made public. "This excellent person was ordained pastor of the church in Braintree, in September 1672, in which sacred employment he continued till his dying day, a diligent, faithful labor-

* See Appendix M for some account of this Diary.

er in the harvest of Jesus Christ; studious in the Holy Scriptures, having an extraordinary gift in prayer above many good men; and in preaching equal to the most, inferior to few; zealously diligent for God and the good of men; one who thought no labor, cost, or suffering too dear a price for the good of his people. His public preaching was attended with convincing light and clearness, and powerful, affectionate application; and his private oversight was performed with humility and unwearied diligence. He lived till he was near sixty-five years of age, beloved and honored of the most that knew him. On the 18th of July, being the Lord's day, he preached all day in public, but was not well. The distemper continued and proved a malignant fever. So that little hopes of recovery appearing, his church assembled together, and earnestly besought the great Shepherd of the sheep, that they might not be deprived of him. But heaven had otherwise determined; for on Tuesday, August 10th, he died about one in the afternoon, and was, with suitable solemnity and great lamentation, interred in Braintree in his own tomb, the 12th day."

Such is the affectionate tribute paid to the memory of a faithful minister of Christ by one of his unpretending parishioners. How much more valuable such a witness borne to the solid worth of a man, than the most studied eulogy, composed according to the rules of art, and inscribed for the world's eye on costly monuments!

To Mr. Fiske succeeded in the ministry in this place Mr. Joseph Marsh.* Mr. Marsh was graduated at

* See Appendix N.

Harvard College in 1705. In 1706 and 1707 he was employed as teacher of a school in Hingham, and was unanimously called to the ministry in this place, and ordained, May 18th, 1709. "He continued," says Mr. Hancock, "his faithful labors here till his translation." His death took place, March 8, 1725 – 6, in the 41st year of his age, and 17th of his ministry. His remains lie in the same tomb with those of his immediate predecessor, Mr. Fiske. His son kept a private school in this town, and the late President Adams and Josiah Quincy Jr. were among his pupils.

Mr. Marsh's successor in the ministry was Mr. John Hancock,* whose father was minister of Lexington, and who to a venerable old age retained great influence in all the neighboring churches. Mr. Hancock was settled here, November 2, 1726, and continued in the exercise of his ministry until his decease, which took place, May 7, 1744. He died in the 42d year of his age, having discharged his sacred duties nearly eighteen years. A sermon was preached at his funeral by Dr. Gay of Hingham, who thus speaks of the qualities of the deceased pastor: "It is the death of a prophet, and of the son of a prophet we are bewailing; of an able minister of the New Testament, taken away from us in the midst of his days and growing serviceableness. —

"The Father of lights furnished him with good gifts, natural and acquired, for the work of the ministry: his prayers and sermons were judiciously composed, and gravely uttered in the language of Holy Scripture, and with a moving pathos; discovering a large and intimate acquaintance with the most substantial things of

* See Appendix O.

religion, and breathing a spirit of piety toward God, and of love to the souls of men.

"As a wise and skilful pilot hath he steered you a right and safe course, in the late troubled sea of ecclesiastical affairs, guarding you against dangerous rocks, on the one hand and on the other; so that you have escaped the errors and enthusiasm which some, and the infidelity and indifferency in matters of religion, which others have fallen into."

The preacher, in the latter portion of the passage I have just quoted, alludes to the excitement which had been occasioned in this community, by the visit, to New England, of the celebrated Whitfield, whose extraordinary eloquence and zeal roused an interest in the subject of religion as extravagant and enthusiastic, as the previous torpor had been lamentable. Mr. Hancock seems to have evinced wisdom, fortitude, and faithfulness in the discharge of his duties through that trying season.

Mr. Hancock was singularly favored in some of the circumstances of his life and ministry. He transmitted to his son a name, which has been rendered, by that son's conspicuous position and acknowledged virtues, illustrious in the eyes of the world, and which must ever be repeated in connexion with the history of Freedom in this Western Continent. And with the water of Christian baptism, he gave the name of John to another individual, who stood before kings and princes, the fearless and persevering advocate of his country's rights, who raised himself, with the consent of millions, to the people's throne, and who fell asleep in an honored old age, with the glad shouts ringing in his ears of a nation he had helped to redeem.

During the ministry of Mr. Hancock a new and commodious, and for the time elegant place * of worship was erected by his society, which was dedicated by the pastor in 1732, and which, after standing nearly a century, was taken down, when the more spacious and costly edifice, in which we are now assembled, was erected. In 1739, at the conclusion of the first century from the gathering of this ancient church, he collected the scattered memorials of its history, which I have on the present occasion done but little more than to repeat, and uttered those fervent prayers and benedictions, which, we will trust in God, have, amidst many imperfections incident to humanity, been in some good measure answered and realized, in the multitudes that since his time have met within the walls of the former or latter house, to hear the words of life and the messages of salvation; who have sat down together at the Lord's table to commemorate the love of a dying Redeemer; or who have been brought hither, in unconscious infancy or more unconscious death, to receive upon their brows the sign of the covenant, or to be dismissed, with the voice of supplication, through the gates of death, to the mansions of departed spirits, and to the presence of their God.

After the death of Mr. Hancock, the pulpit of this church was unsupplied by a settled pastor, for the space of a year and a half or more. The first candidate whose name is mentioned in the Precinct Records was Mr. Stevens. Mr. Benjamin Stevens, after supplying the pulpit several Sundays, was, by a unanimous vote, passed on the 22d of October, 1744, elected pastor of

* See Appendix. P.

this church, and invited to settle here in the ministry. He saw reason to decline the invitation. The call was repeated at a subsequent meeting, and was again respectfully declined. At another meeting, held 25th February, 1744–5, three gentlemen were put in nomination, Mr. Vinal, Mr. Newman, and Mr. Stevens. Mr. Stevens now had the largest number of votes; but it was apparent that there was a division in the minds of the people, and he, in his reply, proposed that the matter of his settlement, in this state of things, should be laid before a council of clergymen of the neighboring churches. The result was a final reply from Mr. Stevens in the negative. On the 29th of July, 1745, the precinct wisely voted that they would employ but one candidate, and that an invitation to supply the pulpit should be given to Mr. Lemuel Briant.* Mr. Briant was soon after elected minister of this church by an unanimous vote. He accepted the invitation in a letter which stands recorded in the North Precinct Records, and he was ordained, December 4, 1745. Mr. Briant was a native of Scituate, Massachusetts, where his ancestors had resided from a very early period in the history of the country. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1739. He has been pronounced "a man of extraordinary powers;" and the writings which I have met with from his pen prove that this praise is not without solid grounds. His sentiments in theology were liberal; and although the great majority of his society appear to have gone along with him cordially, there were some who were disturbed by the boldness with which he attacked current doctrines, and more than all, perhaps, disturbed by the singularities which

* See Appendix Q.

were only natural to him. In the year 1749 he published a sermon, the title of which was, "The Absurdity and Blasphemy of depreciating Moral Virtue; a sermon preached at the West Church in Boston, June 18, 1749," from the text, Isaiah lxiv. 6; — "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" — in which it was the object of the preacher to vindicate the text from the common, but, as he esteemed it, false interpretation, as if the Prophet meant to condemn, as utterly worthless and despicable, all the righteousness which consisted in the best endeavors of the best men; whereas he explained the Prophet as speaking in reference to the whole community, and asserting that the Jewish nation, as a nation, was destitute of that, which, instead of being worthless and despicable, it was most desirable and essential that men should acquire. This sermon could not fail to be a signal for a theological controversy; and accordingly one began, and was carried on between Mr. Briant, on the one side, and Mr. Niles of the middle precinct in Braintree, Mr. Porter of Bridgewater, Mr. Foxcroft of Boston, and several others, on the opposite side. A sermon, evidently intended as a reply to Mr. Briant, was delivered by Mr. Porter in the middle precinct of Braintree. To this sermon, which was afterwards printed, Mr. Briant replied in the form of a letter addressed to the author. This letter was answered by Mr. Porter and his friends (or attestators, as they were rather singularly called). Mr. Briant came before the public with a second letter; and there, I presume, the controversy rested. One of the opponents of Mr. Briant in this controversy took occasion to speak, in a depreciating tone, of Dr. Mayhew, whom he scornfully calls *the intimate friend* of the pastor of Braintree First Church.

I have already stated that Mr. Briant's sermon on moral virtue was printed after having been preached at the West Church, Boston, where Dr. Mayhew was the settled pastor. It had probably met with a favorable reception there, which occasioned the publication. But the circumstance that was mentioned in a scornful tone will excite in the minds of posterity quite another sentiment. To have been the friend of Dr. Mayhew was honorable alike to the head and heart of Mr. Briant.

Mr. Briant is the only one of your ministers, since the gathering of this ancient church, whose ashes do not repose here. He was dismissed from the pastoral care of this church, October 22, 1753, at his own earnest request that "they would release him from the burdens and labors of his office." His health had failed him; and this seems to have occasioned the request, which was granted by his society, with thanks to him for his labors among them. He died the year following at Hingham, and was buried among his fathers at Scituate.

To Mr. Briant must be awarded the praise of being a man of first rate abilities, a bold and clear thinker, whose mind had run considerably beyond the prevalent sentiments of his day. His sermon on moral virtue was a fearless and vigorous exposure of the absurdities into which a creed had been pushed, and from which it was essential that Christianity should be vindicated, in order to save it from the neglect of thinking men. And yet it is well for us to remember, that truth in all its fulness and beauty is not to be found in the midst of the strong and angry feelings, excited by opposition and controversy. Truth shuns the confusion and agitation of controversy, and loves quiet, calm, long sustained

contemplation, during which all sides of the great theme are deliberately surveyed, and the mind, avoiding extremes, attains those well balanced opinions and moderate sentiments, which are essential features of sound philosophy and true religion.

It may seem strange to you, my hearers, that I should bring them together; but I cannot avoid instituting a comparison between Mr. Wheelwright, the first preacher at Mount Wollaston, and Mr. Briant, who, more than a century afterwards, ministered to this church. Little is hazarded in the assertion, that in point of intellect they stand in the first class of the New England clergy. They were very different, I am well aware, in the structure and tendency of their minds, and quite at variance in the creeds which they adopted and advocated, each with so much acuteness, force, and persuasiveness. But it is for this very reason that they deserve to be studied in connexion. They were placed in somewhat similar circumstances, during the respective periods in which they lived. They were both of them bold and candid, and of course imprudent, in the statement of their honest thoughts. They were both of them specimens of minds that resisted the current notions and prejudices of their times. They both of them incurred odium by the Christian manliness with which they opened and pursued the truths that broke upon their souls. Their minds ran, it is true, on very different lines of thought, and they advocated theories in morals and in theology very diverse. But each attacked what he considered the leading, most prominent error of his day; and if they were mistaken in respect to their own times, the errors which each exposed so thoroughly have prevailed at one period or another of the Christian church.

Each of them undertook to defend and illustrate a single feature of the Gospel, and it was that particular feature which each supposed to be most in danger of being overlooked or undervalued, amidst the peculiar prejudices by which he was surrounded. I have an impression, my hearers, that a true and rational and comprehensive theology might be formed, and in no way so well as by uniting together, and harmonizing, and holding in this union and harmony, the two opposite systems of thought and opinion, which Mr. Wheelwright, on the one hand, and Mr. Briant, on the other hand, held and advocated, each so honestly, fearlessly, and vigorously; and it seems to me that never more, than in the present age, was such an union as this desirable. If Christianity is to be represented to men as a mere collection of prudential maxims, or a round of punctilious observances, and if the spiritual character of it, its principle of faith, is to be forgotten and laid aside, then surely, and in proportion as we see cause to fear this result, we may take up the language of the first preacher at the Mount, and say: the time of fasting is come; the true cause for a fast is present; Christ is removed; the bridegroom is taken away; and we must mourn. And if, on the other hand, the spiritual doctrine is to be so exalted, and refined into such an impalpable mysticism, as to hide every practical principle, that ought to sway men's lives and determine their characters, in the clouds; if the doctrine is to be so rarefied, that we cannot breathe it, or if, when we do inhale it, it can support no vitality; if it is to be pressed so far as to cast derision upon ordinances, and to discredit those institutions which have been framed in order to build up and strengthen the moral and

religious habits and principles of a community, — I say habits and principles, not instincts and impulses; — then surely, with Mr. Briant, we shall be ready to exclaim in his nervous language, that "the perfect religion of Jesus, which contains the most refined system of morality the world was ever blessed with; which everywhere considers us as moral agents, and suspends our whole happiness upon our personal good behavior, and our patient continuance in the ways of well-doing, is turned into an idle speculation, a mysterious faith, and a groundless recumbency, everything but what in fact it is, a doctrine of sobriety, righteousness, and piety."

Next to Mr. Briant was Mr. Wibird * in the order of ministers of this church. In the interval that occurred between the dismission of Mr. Briant and the settlement of Mr. Wibird, Mr. Barnes, afterwards the eccentric and rather distinguished Dr. Barnes of Scituate, had received an invitation to settle here, which he saw fit to decline twice. Mr. Wibird's ministry was a long and a peaceful one. Many of my hearers must remember him, and there are probably many present, upon whose infant brows he sprinkled the water of Christian baptism. The older members of this church will not need any attempt of mine to increase the interest, which their own vivid remembrances, aided and heightened by the present occasion, must awaken in their minds.

In 1800 your present senior pastor † was associated with Mr. Wibird, a short time previous to his decease; and my venerable friend still remains, the living link that connects the humble individual, that addresses you,

* See Appendix R. † See Appendix S.

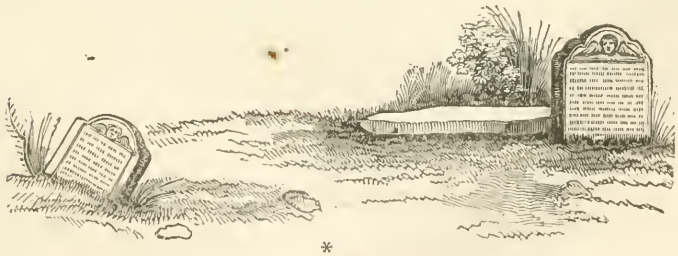
with the long line of shepherds who have watched this flock, and who, with a single exception, gave up their breath to mingle with the air that had supported their life, and laid down their dust to mingle with the soil on which they had trodden.

Brethren and Fathers, after this sketch of the history of our church, which although extended has not, I hope, been tedious, and however imperfect, not wholly unedifying, we are brought back to our text. When the woman of Samaria said with so much natural feeling, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," and the Saviour replied, that the time would come when they should neither in that mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father; he did not, I conceive, intend to rebuke the natural sentiment which attaches every good heart to the spot, where fathers and fathers' fathers have worshipped, in their successive generations; but only to correct and purify and expand the sentiment, that it might not degenerate into a superstitious partiality for a place, to the neglect of God's spiritual attributes, and his universal presence. And let the sentiment, so corrected and expanded, possess our minds.

And now, if I had the power to call up from their resting places, in yonder burying ground, or from more distant spots, where two of them lay down to their final repose, the bodies of the former pastors and ministers of this church; and if I could call out of the heaven, where we trust their spirits dwell, the immortal vitality that once quickened them, and could bring them in ghostly procession up this aisle to this altar, — what think ye would be the lessons that would be uttered by those ministers of Christ? Would they not say to you; Preserve the institutions which we, in our day,

exhorted men to honor. Desert not the sanctuary of your fathers. Guard with vigilant caution the sacred places where prayer was ever wont to be made. Above all, reverence the vital principles of the Gospel. If you must renounce our dogmas, do not, O do not renounce our principles. If you cannot accept our creed in every particular, because you have faithfully followed the advice of Robinson, the great light which we honored and followed, do not, O do not fall from a life of piety and Christian righteousness. It must not be. I will be assured that this occasion has a meaning to your souls, beyond what language can express. I will believe that a deep and a holy interest, an interest which nothing can destroy, is felt in this ancient church, where your fathers came before you, to receive the bread of life, and to draw water from the wells of salvation.

And, in conclusion, may I not say (and will you not, one and all, join me in the sentiment?) to those departed shepherds whose repose I have, in idea, disturbed: Go back venerated shades, to the quiet chambers, where the hands of affection laid you silently and hopefully down; — we will strive to follow in your steps; and we will hope to share with you your glory.



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* See Appendix T.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

A. Page 7.

On the 29th of September, 1839, which date answered to Sept. 17, old style, occurred the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the gathering of the First Congregational Church in this place. The occasion, falling on a Sabbath, was noticed with appropriate services, both parts of the day. The prayer in the forenoon was offered by the senior pastor of the church, Rev. Peter Whitney; and in the afternoon, by Rev. George Whitney of Roxbury. By a special vote of the Church, passed on a previous Sabbath, the Communion, which would have taken place regularly on the first Sabbath in October, was celebrated at this time, in imitation of the course pursued by our predecessors, at the conclusion of the first century. In the forenoon the following Hymn, written for the occasion by the Hon. John Quincy Adams, was sung by the choir.

THE HOUR GLASS.

Alas! how swift the moments fly!
How flash the years along!
Scarce here, yet gone already by!
The burden of a song.
See childhood, youth, and manhood pass;
And age with furrowed brow:
Time was — Time shall be, drain the glass —
But where in Time is *now*?

Time is the measure but of change;
No present hour is found,
The past — the future fill the range
Of Time's unceasing round.
Where then is now? In realms above,
With God's atoning Lamb,
In regions of eternal Love,
Where sits enthroned I Am.

Then, Pilgrim, let thy joys and tears
On Time no longer lean;
But henceforth all thy hopes and fears
From Earth's affections wean.
To God! let votive accents rise;
With truth — with virtue live;
So all the bliss that Time denies,
Eternity shall give.

The two Psalms that follow were sung in the afternoon. In selecting them it was thought that the interest attaching to them as relics of old times would more than compensate for the rudeness of the versification. They were taken from a copy, bearing date 1640, (kindly furnished me by the Rev. Dr. Harris from the Library of Massachusetts Historical Society,) of the New England version of the Psalms. This was the first *book* printed in America. And this version of the Psalms was, doubtless, used by the Braintree church soon after it was gathered.

Psalm 107. Tune — *St. Martin's.*

O give ye thanks unto the Lord,
Because that good is he;
Because his loving-kindness lasts
To perpetuity.

So let the Lord's redeem'd say; whom
He freed from th' enemies hands;
And gather'd them from East and West,
From South and Northern lands.

Then did they to Jehovah cry,
When they were in distress;
Who did them set at liberty
Out of their anguishes.

In such a way that was most right
He led them forth also;
That to a city which they might
Inhabit they might go.

O that men would Jehovah praise
For his great goodness *then;*
And for his workings wonderful
Unto the sons of men.

Psalm 102. Tune — *Old Hundred.*

My days as shadows that decline,
And like the wither'd grass am I;
But thou, Lord, dost abide for aye,
And thy name to eternity.

Thy years throughout all ages are,
Thou hast the Earth's foundation laid
For elder time: and heavens be
The work which thine own hands have made.

They perish shall, but thou shalt stand;
They all as garments shall decay;
And as a wearing-vestiment,
Thou shalt them change, and chang'd are they.

But thou art ev'n the same; thy years
They never shall consumed be;
Thy servants' children shall abide,
And their seed, 'stablish'd before thee.

The last of these Psalms was read and sung, line by line, according to the ancient practice. The writer feels greatly indebted to the choir for their kind compliance with his suggestions in regard to the music, on this occasion, and for their very excellent performances both parts of the day.

B. Pages 7, 38.

The names subscribed to the covenant at the gathering of the church are as follow:

William Tompson, (*Pastor,*)
Henry Flynt, (*Teacher,*)
George Rose,
Stephen Kinsley, (*Elder,*)
John Dassett,
William Potter,
Martin Saunders,
Gregory Belcher.

C. Pages 16, 42.

Mr. Savage, in his valuable edition of Winthrop's New England, gives it as his opinion, but without stating his reasons for the opinion, that the settlement at Mount Wollaston, which had been made by Captain Wollaston in 1625, "was permanent, though the high authority of Governor Dudley's Narrative makes it vanish; and if permanent, must be considered the oldest of Massachusetts colony, unless Weymouth should assert a claim of vitality through its state of suspended animation."

I will endeavor to present some reasons for this opinion, although I cannot but regret that this was omitted by the learned Editor, who would have done so much more justice to the subject. It will be remembered, that after Wollaston had left his new plantation and gone to the South, Thomas Morton assumed the chief authority, and occasioned great trouble to the neighboring settlers. In 1628 an armed force was raised against him; he was arrested, and sent out of the country, and according to Gov. Dudley, the settlement at Mount Wollaston came to an end, and disappeared. It will also be borne in mind, that, in Sept. 3, 1634, it was ordered by the General Court, "that Boston shall have enlargement at Mount Wollaston and Rumney Marsh." The only question then is, whether during the six years that intervened from 1628 to 1634, there were settlers who continued in this place.

It may not be amiss to mention here that the island, which once belonged to this town, called Thomson's Island, was taken possession of by one David Thomson, in the year 1626.* He died soon after, leaving a son and heir, John Thomson, who, as soon as he came of age, presented a petition to the General Court, and had the property in the island confirmed to him and his heirs forever.

Johnson, in his Wonder-working Providence, says: "To the south-east of him (Mr. Wm. Blackstone) near an island called Thomson's Island, lived some few planters more; these persons were the first planters of those parts, having some small trading with the Indians for beaver-skins, which moved them to make their abode in those parts, whom these first troops of Christ's army" (that is, Gov. Winthrop's company) "found as fit helps to further their work."† And again the same author: "Near about this town

* Mass. Colony Records.

† Johnson, p. 37.

(Dorchester) inhabited some few ancient Traders, who were not of this select band, but came for other ends, as Morton of Merry Mount." * Prince, in his Chronology, too, in speaking of the state of the neighboring parts of the Massachusetts Bay, when Governor Winthrop's company arrived, and began their settlement at Boston, uses almost the same terms in relation to the "planters near Thomson's Island." The question occurs, Who were those planters to whom he alludes? There had been a plantation at Nantasket as early as that date, and one also at Weymouth, (Wessagussett.) But Mount Wollaston was nearer to Thomson's Island than either of those two places. And a probable inference may be drawn from thence, that the settlement at the Mount, begun by Wollaston, was permanent; that some of his company remained here after Morton was expelled in 1628; that these continued in this place down to the time when Mount Wollaston was, by order of court, annexed to Boston; and that *they* were the *old planters* referred to by Johnson, when he says; "About this time (1640) there was a town and church planted at Mount Wollaston and named Braintree; it was occasioned by some *old planters*, and certain farmers belonging to the great town of Boston."

Furthermore, in the Massachusetts Colony Records I find, under date of Nov. 7, 1632, "100 acres of land granted to Mr. Roger Ludlow, to enjoy to him and his heirs forever, lying betwixt Musquantum Chapel and the mouth of Naponsett."

Again, a book called "New England's Prospect," † written by Mr. Wood, and printed in London in the year 1639, gives the following description of Mount Wollaston: — "Three miles to the north of this (Wessagussett) is Mount Wolliston, a very fertile soil, and a place very convenient for farmers' houses, there being great store of plain ground, without trees. Near this place is Massachusetts fields, where the greatest Sagamore in the country lived, before the plague, who caused it to be cleared for himself." After describing several other plantations, the same writer concludes in these words; "These be all the towns that were begun, when I came for England, which was the 15th of August, 1633." From which it appears, that so early as 1633, that is, a year at least before the Mount was granted by the General Court to be a part of Boston,

* Johnson, p. 41. † Page 31.

the place was so much occupied and improved, as to deserve to be mentioned by a traveller, as one of the plantations of the country.

The Hon. John Quincy Adams gives it as his opinion, "that the Braintree company, mentioned by Winthrop in 1632, as having begun to settle at Mount Wollaston, did not remove to Newtown, or at least remained, most of them, where they had begun to settle. That *they* were the *old planters* mentioned by the Wonder-working Providence, and that it was at their solicitation that the name, Braintree, the place in England, whence they came, was given to the town." * I have already stated who are meant, in my opinion, by the phrase *old planters* in Johnson. With respect to the question, whether the Braintree company removed hence to Newtown, or continued here, where they first sat down, the following remarks are offered. "The Braintree company, which had begun to sit down at Mount Wollaston, by order of court, removed to Newtown." Such is Gov. Winthrop's testimony. And that the company did actually remove thither is positively asserted by Dr. Holmes, who, in his History of Cambridge,† (at first called Newtown,) gives the names of that company. Among the names contained in his list are the following, namely, Jeremy Adams, John Pratt, Nathaniel Richards, Wm. Wadsworth, Richard Webb, John White; names which, at the present day, are familiar in this and the neighboring towns. But in September of 1634, the General Court was occupied with the application, made by Mr. Hooker and his friends, for permission to remove from Newtown to Connecticut River, they complaining of want of room. It seems there was at first considerable opposition to this application. The difficulty was removed for a time by "the congregation of Newtown coming and accepting such enlargement as had formerly been offered them by Boston and Watertown." My conjecture is, that at this time some of the original settlers of Newtown, belonging to the Braintree company, so called, accepted lands of Boston at Mount Wollaston, especially as it was about this time that Boston had been enlarged by the court at Mount Wollaston, and as one of the chief subjects of complaint alleged by the Newtown settlers was "their want of ac-

* See Family Memorial, by Elisha Thayer, for a letter to the author by Hon. Mr. Adams, pp. 39, 40.

† Holmes's History of Cambridge, in Mass. Historical Collections.

commodation for their cattle." The Braintree company appears to have been divided in 1634. A portion of them, according to the supposition stated above, received grants of land at Mount Wollaston, and these gave the name of Braintree to the place, when afterwards it was incorporated as a town; — and the other division of the company subsequently journeyed to the Connecticut River, and laid the foundations of Hartford.

D. Page 19.

John Wheelwright, the founder and first minister of Exeter, came from Lincolnshire, in England, and arrived at Boston, 26 May, 1636.* It was for a long time taken for granted, that Wheelwright's first coming to this country was earlier than the date mentioned above, upon the strength of a Deed purporting to have been given by four Indian Sachems, 17 May, 1629, by which they convey lands, within the bounds of what is now New Hampshire, to one Mr. John Wheelwright, a minister of the gospel, and to his associates, upon certain specified conditions. Belknap inserted this Indian Deed in the Appendix to his History of New Hampshire, and regarded it as genuine. It has been shown, by Mr. Savage, in his edition of Winthrop's Journal, not to be genuine. For the clear and conclusive reasoning by which the spuriousness of the document is made out, the reader is referred to the Appendix to Savage's Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 405. Wheelwright's first coming to this country, then, was in 1636. I find in the Records of the First Church, Boston, that "John Wheelwright and Mary his wife were admitted members the 12th day of the 4th month, 1636." In the same Records is also the following entry: "The 30th of the 8th month, 1636. Our brother Mr. John Wheelwright was granted unto for the preparing for a church gathering at Mount Wollystone upon a petition from some of them that were resident there."

Under date of 1636, Aug. 24, we find the following in Winthrop's Journal: "The inhabitants of Boston, who had taken their farms

* Farmer's Geneal. Reg.

and lots at Mount Wollaston, finding it very burdensome to have their business so far off, desired to gather a church there. Many meetings were about it. The great let was, in regard it was given to Boston for upholding the town and church there, which end would be frustrate by the removal of so many chief men as would go thither. For helping of this, it was propounded, that such as dwelt there should pay sixpence the acre, yearly, for such lands as lay within a mile of the water, and three pence for that which lay further off."

There was a grant of land made to Mr. Wheelwright, at the Mount, which is thus recorded in the Old Records of the Town of Boston.

"The 2—th of the 12th mo. 1636.—At a meeting this day of Thomas Oliver and the other overseers, it is agreed that our brother Mr. John Wheelwright shall have an allotment of 250 acres laid out for him at Mount Wollaston, where may be most convenient, without prejudice to setting up of a town there, to be laid out by Mr. Coddington and our brother Wright."

And afterwards the following:—"3d of 2d mo. 1637. Allotment of 250 acres to John Wheelwright by W. Coddington and our brother Richard Wright thus; viz. 40 acres thereof in the sunk marsh lying South and by East of the land of the said W. Coddington —5 acres for his house lot, and 205 acres at the end of it, running with one side of the first lot, and the line of 20 acres of the planting ground allotted to be extended into the country till his full proportion of 205 acres between these two lines be run out."

Mrs. Hutchinson had already broached her new opinions, and was favored, in the promulgation of them, by her brother, Mr. Wheelwright, by Mr. Vane, then governor of the colony, and by other prominent persons; and it seems to have been on account of these opinions, that Cotton and Winthrop objected to the proposal to retain Mr. Wheelwright as one of the ministers of Boston First Church. An alarm had spread through the colony, and in the month before, that is, October, Winthrop informs us, that "the ministers of the Bay assemble in Boston to inquire respecting Wheelwright's and Mrs. Hutchinson's new opinions."

On the 20th of January, 1636–7, on occasion of a fast which had been appointed by the public authorities, Mr. Wheelwright preached his famous sermon, which occasioned finally his expulsion

from the colony. A perfect copy of this sermon, in a modern hand, exists in the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society; as well as a fragment, containing about three fourths of the sermon, in a more ancient handwriting. Of this fragment Mr. Savage says, that it is "probably original." But from a note on one of the blank leaves of the manuscript, which informs that "it was left in the hand of Mr. John Coggeshall, who was a deacon of the church in Boston;" it may be inferred that it is *not* original, but that it was copied by, and is in the handwriting of Mr. Coggeshall, a supporter of Wheelwright, and one who was banished for his adherence to that gentleman.

I have said in the text, that I suppose this sermon was delivered at Mount Wollaston. My reason for this assertion was, that Wheelwright had already, as has been shown, received authority to minister to the church gathering at the Mount; and there occurred to me no reason for doubting, that the sermon would be delivered at the place where he ordinarily preached. It is true, that on the old manuscript is written, that the sermon was preached in Boston. This, however, is not decisive of the point, because Mount Wollaston was, at that time, a part of Boston. A stronger objection to my assertion is a passage in Welde's Tract entitled — "Rise, Reign, and Ruin of the Antinomians" — printed in 1644. "That upon the said Fast (Mr. Wheelwright being desired by the Church to exercise as a private brother by way of prophecy) when Mr. Cotton teaching in the afternoon out of Esa. 58. 4, had showed that it was not a fit work for a day of fast, to move strife and debate, &c.; yet Mr. Wheelwright, *speaking after him*, taught as is here before mentioned," &c. If this is to be taken literally, and not as the description given by a bitter opponent, who was seeking to make out a strong case against Wheelwright, it may still be supposed, that the sermon had been delivered to his own congregation at the Mount, and then the substance of it repeated in the Boston First Church in the afternoon. I am somewhat confirmed in this conjecture by the date of the grant of land made to Wheelwright, 3d of April, 1637. When the sermon was delivered, therefore, Mr. Wheelwright, as we must infer, had no house at the Mount, and would, on that account, be more likely to preach one part of the day there, and the other part in the First Church.

It cannot be pretended, that Wheelwright never preached at all

at the Mount, because all the early historians agree in their testimony that he did.

Under date of May 24, 1637, Winthrop says; "The former governor and Mr. Coddington, being discontented that the people had left them out of all public service, gave further proof of it in the congregation; for they refused to sit in the magistrates' seat, (where Mr. Vane had always sitten from his first arrival,) and went and sate with the deacons, although the governor sent to desire them to come in to him. And upon the day of the general fast, they went from Boston to keep the day at the Mount with Mr. Wheelwright."

The Fast here mentioned was, doubtless, subsequent to the one upon which Wheelwright's sermon was delivered. But the extract proves that he ministered here, and if he preached on this occasion at the Mount, why not on the fast which occured four months before?

I shall mention but one more authority out of many that exist, to prove that Mr. Wheelwright actually preached, for some time, at the Mount: it is Welde, in his History of Antinomianism. He relates an incident that "fell out at Mr. Wheelwright his *farewell* to those whom he used to preach unto at the Mount." Gov. Winthrop and Mr. Welde were contemporaries with Mr. Wheelwright, and of course their testimony as to the point under consideration is conclusive.

But perhaps too much space has been devoted to the question *where* this sermon was delivered. It is more curious than important, after all. To illustrate the *character* of the sermon, I have given two extracts from it in another place, and have endeavored to explain the leading idea of the sermon. For the *consequences* that resulted from it, we are informed by Winthrop that, at the court which began, March 9, 1636–7, Mr. Wheelwright was adjudged "guilty of sedition, and also of contempt." Sentence was deferred, however. There followed remonstrances and petitions from the governor (Mr. Vane) and other dissenters, as well as from the Boston First Church, justifying the sermon, and condemning the court's proceedings. A synod was also convened, consisting of all the ministers of the colony, by whom the theological questions involved in the controversy were discussed. This assembly terminated unfavorably for Mr. Wheelwright. In the

mean time a political revolution had been effected. Vane and Coddington, friends of Wheelwright, had been left out of the offices they had previously held. At length, "the General Court being assembled in the 2d of the 9th month, and finding, upon consultation, that two so opposite parties could not continue in the same body, without apparent hazard of ruin to the whole, agreed to send away some of the principal, &c. Then the Court sent for Mr. Wheelwright, and he persisting to justify his sermon, and his whole practice and opinions, and refusing to leave either the place or his public exercisings, he was disfranchised and banished. Upon which he appealed to the king, but neither called witnesses, nor desired any act to be made of it. The Court told him, that an appeal did not lie; for by the king's grant we had power to hear and determine without any reservation, &c. So he relinquished his appeal, and the Court gave him leave to go to his house, upon his promise, that, if he were not gone out of our jurisdiction within fourteen days, he would render himself to one of the magistrates." *

The latter part of November, 1637, was, therefore, the time when Wheelwright left the Massachusetts jurisdiction. His friends and adherents, who were banished at the same time, went to the south, and purchasing the island of Aquetneck from the natives, began the separate colony of Rhode Island. They were solicitous that he should join them; but he bent his steps in a different direction, and sitting down at the Falls of the Piscataqua, laid the foundation of the town of Exeter, one of the earliest settlements in New Hampshire. In the Boston First Church Records is the following: "Mr. John Wheelwright dismissed with eight others to the church at the Falls of Paschataqua 11th mo. 6[d] 1638." There he remained, until, in 1642, according to Belknap, "the inhabitants of Exeter, finding themselves comprehended within the claim of Massachusetts, petitioned the Court, and were readily admitted (Sept. 8.) under their jurisdiction. And they were annexed to the county of Essex. Upon this, Wheelwright, who was still under sentence of banishment, with those of his church who were resolved to adhere to him, removed into the province of Maine, and settled at Wells."

* Winthrop.

In 1643, Sept. 10, Mr. Wheelwright wrote to Gov. Winthrop a letter, in which he confessed that he had pressed his theological views too far, and urged them with an undue warmth, and upon this, his sentence of banishment was soon after released. Being restored to the freedom of the colony, he removed to Hampton, where he ministered many years. In the year 1658, according to Farmer, he was in England, and was in favor with the Protector. Cromwell and he are said to have been school-fellows; and the anecdote has been handed down, that Cromwell declared Wheelwright to be the only person he ever was afraid of at football. Upon the fall of the Commonwealth, and the restoration of the royal government in England, Wheelwright returned, and settled at Salisbury, and there died, 15 Nov. 1679. "He lived," says Hutchinson, "to be the oldest minister in the colony, which would have been taken notice of, if his persecutors had not remained in power." Mr. Wheelwright, according to the same authority, was "several years in England, and lived in the neighborhood of Sir Henry Vane, who had been his patron in New England, and now took great notice of him. Vane being disaffected to Cromwell, it is not likely that Cromwell had any great esteem for Wheelwright; yet he sent for him by one of his guard, and after a very orthodox discourse, according to Mr. Wheelwright's apprehensions of orthodoxy, 'and without showing countenance to sectaries,' he exhorted him to perseverance against his opposers, and assured him their notions would vanish into nothing. This meeting effectually engaged Mr. Wheelwright in Cromwell's favor."

E. Page 21.

Mrs. Ann Hutchinson, who caused such an excitement in the colony, came over to this country in September, 1634. Her husband, Wm. Hutchinson, had a grant of land made to him at Mount Wollaston. She is described by Welde, in his book against the Antinomians, as "a woman of a haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit, and a very voluble tongue, more bold

than a man, though in understanding and judgment inferior to many women." But Welde was a Puritan, and therefore devoid of gallantry; and a bigot, and therefore without charity. Soon after she came into the country, she established meetings at her house, which were attended by persons of her own sex, at which the sermons of the previous Sabbath were criticised, the performances of the different ministers of the neighborhood compared, and points in theology discussed. The consequence was, that the colony was divided into two parties, whose relative strength was tested at the polls. Gov. Vane lost his election, and soon after returned to England; and Mrs. Hutchinson and her adherents were banished from the colony. Winthrop informs us, that, after sentence of banishment had been pronounced by the court against her, "she went by water to her farm at the Mount, where she was to take water, with Mr. Wheelwright's wife and family, to go to Pascataquack; but she changed her mind, and went by land to Providence, and so to the island in the Narraganset Bay, which her husband and the rest of that sect had purchased of the Indians, and prepared with all speed to remove into." Her fate was a melancholy one. Her husband having died in 1642, she removed from Rhode Island into the Dutch country, and was killed by the Indians, with all her children, except one daughter, who was carried into captivity.

F. Page 22.

"Wm. Coddington, Esq., the munificent donor of our school lands, which now rent at £142, from which this town has reaped great benefit in good schools for many years past." * Mr. Hancock speaks in this manner of one who deserves to be remembered by the inhabitants of this place. Mr. Coddington came to this country with Gov. Winthrop, and was a man of high respectability and

* Hancock's Century Discourse. The income of the school lands, which Mr. Hancock puts at £142, sounds large. But it must be remembered, that New England paper money had depreciated very much.

good estate. He and the first Edmund Quincy were among the first who received grants of land at this place, when Mount Wollaston, as it was called, formed part of the town of Boston. Mr. Coddington's grant comprised what is now known by the name of the Mount Wollaston Farm, at present belonging to the Hon. John Quincy Adams.

In the first Book of Braintree Town Records is a deed of land conveyed from Wm. Coddington, Esq. to the town of Braintree. The earliest notice I find of the application of the school fund is in the following vote.

"Feb. 1668. That the town of Braintree did consent to lay the school land, that is to say, the annual income of it, for a salary for a school-master, and to make it up £20 besides what every child must give." Mr. Benjamin Tompson, son of the first pastor, was the earliest schoolmaster I can find mention of in this place.

In the Dedication to Callender's Century Discourse, addressed to the Hon. Wm. Coddington, Esq., there is the following notice of the friend of Wheelwright, and the founder of the Commonwealth of Rhode Island.

"Your honored grandfather, William Coddington, Esq., was chosen in England to be an assistant of the colony of the Massachsetts Bay, A. D. 1629, and in 1630 came over to New England with the Governor and the Charter, &c.; after which he was several times rechosen to that honorable and important office. He was for some time treasurer of the colony. He was with the chiefest in all public charges, 'and a principal merchant in Boston,' where he built the first brick house.

"In the year 1637, when the contentions ran so high in the country, he was grieved at the proceedings of the court against Mr. Wheelwright and others. And when he found that his opposition to those measures was ineffectual, he entered his protest, 'that his dissent might appear to succeeding times'; and though he was in the fairest way to be great, in the Massachusetts, as to outward things, yet he voluntarily quitted his advantageous situation at Boston, his large property and his improvements at Braintree,* for peace' sake, and that he might befriend, protect, and assist the pious people, who were meditating a removal from that colony, on account of their religious differences.

* Then Mount Wollaston.

"Here, when the people first incorporated themselves a body politic on this island, they chose him to be their judge or chief ruler, and continued to elect him annually to be their governor for seven years together, till the patent took place, and the island was incorporated with Providence Plantations.

"In the year 1647, he assisted in forming the body of laws, which has been the basis of our constitution and government ever since; and the next year being chosen governor of the colony, declined the office.

"In 1651, he had a commission from the supreme authority then in England, to be governor of the island, pursuant to a power reserved in the patent; but the people being jealous 'the commission might affect their lands and liberties, as secured to them by the patent,' he readily laid it down on the first notice from England that he might do so; and for their further satisfaction and contentment, he, by a writing under his hand, obliged himself to make a formal surrender of all right and title to any of the lands, more than his proportion in common with the other inhabitants, whenever it should be demanded.

"After that, he seems to have retired much from public business, till toward the latter end of his days, when he was again divers times prevailed with to take the government upon him; as he did particularly in 1678, when he died, November 1, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, *a good man full of days.* Thus, after he had the honor to be the first judge and governor of this island, 'after he had spent much of his estate and the prime of his life in propagating plantations,' he died governor of the colony — in promoting the welfare and the prosperity of the little commonwealth, which he had in a manner founded." — See *Callender's Century Sermon, Rhode Island Hist. Soc. Coll.* Vol. IV.

G. Page 23.

Henry Vane descended from a family which had been long distinguished in English History. He was born in 1612, and early in life embraced the religious views held by the Puritans. Finding

his situation at home embarrassing, on account of his disaffection to the established church, he emigrated to America in 1635, and was received in Boston with every demonstration of respect. In 1636, he was elected governor of Massachusetts, being at that time twenty-four years of age. He advocated the sentiments of Mrs. Hutchinson and Mr. Wheelwright, and was the head of what was called the Antinomian party. That party, however, was put down, and Vane took passage for England in August, 1637. He was a member of the Long Parliament, and a decided and consistent friend of liberty, although he disapproved of the trial and execution of King Charles. He was too pure and just not to be an object of hatred and suspicion to Cromwell, when that ambitious personage had secured to himself the supreme power. After the death of Oliver Cromwell, Vane came forth from his retirement, and became a member of Parliament, where he was instrumental, by his eloquence, in overthrowing the government of Richard Cromwell. Upon the restoration of the monarchy, Vane, who had always been a decided republican, was seized and imprisoned, and finally executed. After he had been condemned to death, it was suggested, that, by making submission to the king, his life might perhaps be saved. His noble reply was; "If the king does not think himself more concerned for his honor and word, than I am for my life, let him take it. Nay, I declare that I value my life less in a good cause, than the king can do his promise. He is so sufficiently obliged to spare my life, that it is fitter for him to do it, than for me to seek it." *

The character of Sir Henry Vane has been differently estimated by different historians. The man, however, who has received the commendation of Milton in his own age, and of Sir James Mackintosh in a subsequent period, cannot suffer materially in his fame, from those who can more easily shout fanatic, than they can appreciate his qualities. The following eloquent extract is from one of our own historians.

"At the same time came Henry Vane, the younger, a man of the purest mind; a statesman of spotless integrity; whose name the progress of intelligence and liberty will erase from the rubric of fanatics and traitors, and insert high among the aspirants after truth

* See Life of Vane, by Rev. C. W. Upham, in Sparks's Biography.

and the martyrs for liberty. He had valued the 'obedience of the gospel' more than the successful career of English diplomacy, and cheerfully 'forsook the preferments of the court of Charles for the ordinances of religion in their purity in New-England.' He was happy in the possession of an admirable genius, though naturally more inclined to contemplative excellence than to action; he was happy in the eulogist of his virtues; for Milton, ever so parsimonious of praise, reserving the majesty of his verse to celebrate the glories and vindicate the Providence of God, was lavish of his encomiums on the youthful friend of religious liberty." *

H. Page 38.

The following is a list of the deacons of the church, with the dates annexed, as far as these could be ascertained.

Samuel Bass,	July 5, 1640, received to Communion.
Alexander Winchester,	" 12, " dismissed from First Church Boston.
Richard Brackett,	" 21, 1642, dism. fr. First Church Bost.
Francis Eliot,	Oct. 12, 1653.
William Alice,	" " "
Robert Parmenter,	Nov. 2, 1679.
Samuel Tompson	" " "
Thomas Bass,	
Joseph Penniman,	
Nathaniel Wales,	
Benjamin Savil,	
Moses Paine,	
Gregory Belcher,	
Peter Adams,	Aug. 21, 1727.
Samuel Savil,	" " "

* Bancroft's United States, Vol. I. p. 383.

Jonathan Webb,	May 11, 1747.
John Adams,	" " "
Joseph Palmer,	" 29, (1752 or '53 probably.)
Moses Belcher,	" " " " "
Joseph Neal, jr.	" " " " "
Daniel Arnold,	" 3, 1769.
Benjamin Bass,	" 1, 1771.
Ebenezer Adams,	Nov. 3, 1773.
Jonathan Webb,	
Elijah Veazie,	
Jonathan Bass,	
Josiah Adams,	
Daniel Spear,	Jan. 27, 1811.
Samuel Savil,	Oct. 25, 1817.
William Spear, James Newcomb,	Nov. 22, 1835.

The present deacons are Messrs. Josiah Adams, Samuel Savil, William Spear, and James Newcomb.

The church has had two Ruling Elders; Stephen Kinsley, ordained Oct. 12, 1653, — and Nathaniel Wales, ordained Feb. 27, 1700.

I. Pages 39, 43.

Mr. William Tompson, whose name is spelt without an *h*, was a native of Lancashire, England. He is placed by Cotton Mather in his First Classis, including those that had been in the exercise of their ministry previous to their leaving England. We learn also from Mather, who prefers that his facts should come dancing down to posterity in rude numbers, that he was educated at Oxford, and after leaving the University, exercised his gifts, as a Christian minister, in the North of England.

> " Oxford this light with Tongues and Arts doth trim;
> And then his Northern town doth challenge him.

His time and strength he centred there in this;
To do good works, and be what now he is.
His fulgent virtues there, and learned strains,
Tall, comely presence, life unsoil'd with stains,
Things most on Worthies, in their stories writ,
Did him to move in Orbs of service fit." *

From the same authority we learn, that, as soon as he left the University, he distinguished himself for his zeal and eloquence in the cause of the Protestant religion, and attracted many hearers, and won many converts. In the inscription to a work, the joint production of Mr. Richard Mather, first minister of Dorchester, N. E., and Mr. Wm. Tompson, addressed to Mr. Herle, is the following passage: "Our answer, which as we have written and now published it for the truth's sake — so in special manner in love to yourself and our dear countrymen and friends, as in other places of Lancashire, so in your parish of Winwick, *wherein one of us was born, and the other was for sundry years together an unworthy minister of the Gospel of Christ.*"

Cotton Mather gives *Lowton* as the town in which his ancestor Richard was born, but mentions his being put to school in Winwick, four miles from his father's door; so that the parish of Winwick probably included Lowton; and we may conclude, that it was Tompson who *preached* there. The time of his coming to New England cannot be determined with certainty. Farmer says,† that he came in the year 1637, but does not mention his reasons.

Johnson, in his "Wonder-working Providence," and Josselyn, in his "Chronological Observations," ‡ give 1638 as the year of his emigrating. He is mentioned by the author of "Wonder-working Providence," under date of 1637, as coming into the country just previous to the synod held to settle the Antinomian controversy. This synod began, Aug. 30, 1637. In the Records of Dorchester Church, which I have been enabled to inspect, through the kindness of my friend, Rev. Mr. Hall, and of which a fair copy has been made by the learned Dr. Harris, formerly minister of that church, the name of Mr. Wm. Tompson is given as a member. It stands in connexion with the names of two other ministers, Mr. George

* Mather's Magnalia, Life of Tompson.

† Farmer's Geneal. Register.

‡ See these works in Massachusetts Historical Collections.

Moxon and Mr. Samuel Newman; but no date of admission is given. That church, it appears from the Records, was gathered, the 23d day of August, 1636, and the covenant was then signed by the seven original members, whose names are there given. After these follows a long list of names, without any date, and of these Mr. Tompson's name is the seventy-third in order. As it stands next to the name of Mr. Samuel Newman, we may conclude that they were admitted at the same time. Now Mather informs us, in his life of Mr. Newman, that that individual came over in the year 1638, and that "after his arrival at New England, he spent a year and half at Dorchester,* &c. From these circumstances we are led to infer, that 1638 is the earliest date that can be assigned for the admission of Mr. Tompson into the Dorchester church. The fact before mentioned, that Mather and Tompson came from the same county in England, and had been friends before their flight into the wilderness, may account for Mr. Tompson's having joined himself to Mr. Mather's church in New England. How long he resided in Dorchester is not known. But the next earliest mention of him is found in Winthrop's New England, where he is spoken of as "a very holy man, who had been an instrument of much good at Acomenticus.† This was the original name of York, in what is now the State of Maine. Mr. Tompson was ordained the pastor of the church at Mount Wollaston, the 19th of November, 1639,‡ and made freeman, 13th May, 1640. Mr. Hancock says, in a note to one of his Century Sermons, that "Mr. Tompson was ordained eight days after the church was gathered, viz. Sept. 24, 1639," but Winthrop's authority is to be preferred. Under date of 27th of 11th month (January), 1639, a grant of 120 acres of land at Mount Wollaston was made to Mr. Tompson, free from the rate of 3*s.* pr. acre, which charge was one of the conditions annexed by the town of Boston to the permission they gave the inhabitants at the Mount to become a town by themselves.§ There was at the same time a grant made of 80 acres, free from the same rate, to Mr. Henry Flynt, teacher of the newly gathered church. And as late as the 29th of 5th month (July), 1644, the following grant is re-

* Mather's Magnalia.

† Winthrop's New England, Savage's Edition, Vol. I. p. 324.

‡ Winthrop's New England, Savage's Edition. Vol. I. p. 324.

§ Boston Town Records. First Book.

corded — "That parcel of marsh that belongeth unto the town of Boston in the three hill marsh at Braintree, which was not formerly counted to belong to Mr. Wheelwright's marsh, together with the two hillocks of upland therein, is granted to be equally divided between Wm. Tompson and Henry Flynt, Teacher of the church of Braintree."* The first mention I find of the pastor and teacher in the Braintree Town Records, which have been kindly loaned me by the present Town Clerk of Braintree, is the following:

"29th 10th month (December), 1645. At a town meeting, there being present Mr. Welde, James Peniman, Martin Sanders, Thomas Mekins, Samuel Bass, Peter Brackett. It is ordered, that the 14 acres of Town Marsh shall be improved to the Elders' use, Mr. Tompson and Mr. Flint (till) such time as the Townsmen shall see fit otherwise to dispose of it." †

One of the most important incidents in the life of Mr. Tompson was his being chosen one of three ministers to go on a mission to Virginia, in 1642, upon a request, from certain individuals in that remote colony, that competent ministers of the congregational order should be sent to preach the Gospel to them. The following extract from Hubbard's History of New England will explain the reasons and objects of this mission.

"In the same year (1642) one Mr. Bennet, a gentleman of Virginia, arrived at Boston, bringing letters with him from sundry well-disposed people there, to the ministers of New England, bewailing their sad condition for want of the means of salvation, and earnestly entreating a supply of faithful ministers, whom upon experience of their gifts and godliness they might call to office. Upon these letters, (which were openly read at Boston, on a lecture-day,) the ministers there met, agreed to set a day apart to seek God in the thing, and agreed upon three, which might most easily be spared, viz. Mr. Phillips of Watertown, Mr. Thompson of Braintree, and Mr. Miller of Rowley, (these churches having each of them two ministers,) which the General Court approved of, and ordered that the Governor should commend them, by his letters, to the Governor and Council of Virginia. But Mr. Phillips not being willing to go, Mr. Knowles, his fellow-laborer, and Mr. Thompson were sent

* Boston Town Records. First Book.

† Braintree Town Records. First Book.

away, with the consent of their churches, and departed on their way, on the 7th of October, 1642, to meet the vessel that should transport them at Narraganset; but Mr. Miller, because of his bodily weakness, did not accept the call. Both the churches were willing to dismiss their ministers to that work, and the court likewise did allow and further it, for the advancement of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, not fearing to part with such desirable persons, because they looked at it as seed sown, that might bring in a plentiful harvest.

"They that were sent to Virginia were long wind bound at Rhode Island, and met with many other difficulties, so as they made it eleven weeks of a dangerous passage before they arrived there; but had this advantage in the way, that they took a third minister along with them, viz. Mr. James, (formerly the pastor of the church at Charlestown,) from New Haven. They found loving and liberal entertainment in the country, and were bestowed in several places, by the care of some honest minded persons, that much desired their company, rather than by any care of the governor's. And though the difficulties and dangers they were continually exercised with in their way thither put them upon some question, whether their call were of God or not, yet were they much encouraged by the success of their ministry, through the blessing of God, in that place. Mr. Thompson, a man of a melancholy temper and crazy body, wrote word back to his friends, that he found his health so repaired, and his spirit so enlarged, that he had not been in the like condition since he first left England. But it fared with them, as it had done before with the apostles in the primitive times, that the people magnified them, and their hearts seemed to be much inflamed with an earnest desire after the gospel, though the civil rulers of the country did not allow of their public preaching, because they did not conform to the orders of the Church of England; however the people resorted to them, in private houses, as much as before. At their return, which was the next summer, by the letters they brought with them, it appears that God had greatly blessed their ministry, for the time while they were there, which was not long; for the rulers of the country did in a sense drive them out, having made an order that all such as would not conform to the discipline of the English Church should depart the country by such a day."*

* Hubbard's Hist. of N. England, in Mass. Hist. Coll. Vol. VI. 2d Series.

Winthrop, from whom Hubbard took a great part of the materials of his History, mentions some additional particulars respecting this mission. "They were eleven weeks," he says, "before they arrived. They lay wind-bound some time at Aquiday; then, as they passed Hellgate between Long Island and the Dutch, their pinnace was bilged upon the rocks, so as she was near foundered before they could run on the next shore. The Dutch Governor gave them slender entertainment; but Mr. Allerton of New Haven, being there, took great pains and care for them, and procured them a very good pinnace, and all things necessary. So they set sail in the dead of winter, and had much foul weather, so as with great difficulty and danger they arrived safe in Virginia."*

It appears, from what is related concerning this mission, that, although it did not succeed, as had been anticipated, and was abruptly terminated by the order from the authorities of the Virginia colony, yet it was not wholly without fruit. Many seem to have been favorably impressed by the preaching of Tompson and his associates; and the early historians of New England mention particularly the removal of Daniel Gookins from Virginia to New England, as the result of the deep impression produced by the Puritan preachers from the North. This individual seems to have been highly esteemed in his day. He removed to this part of the country in 1644, and settled in Cambridge; was Major General of the Massachusetts Colony, and was author of "The Historical Collections of the Indians in New England."† Mather thus alludes, and in no bad strain, to the dangers and benefits that attended this mission.

"When Reverend Knowles and he, sailed hand in hand,
To Christ espousing the Virginian land,
Upon a ledge of craggy rocks near stav'd,
His Bible in his bosom thrusting sav'd;
The Bible, the best cordial of his heart,
'Come floods, come flames, (cried he,) we 'll never part.'
A constellation of great converts there,
Shone round him, and his heavenly glory were.
Gookins was one of these: by Tompson's pains,
Christ and New England a dear Gookins gains."‡

* Winthrop's N. England, Vol. II. p 96.

† See Mass. Hist. Collections, where this work has been printed.

‡ Mather's Magnalia, Life of Tompson.

Mr. Tompson met with a severe bereavement in the death, during his absence, of his wife, who is described as "a godly young woman, and a comfortable help to him, being left behind with a company of small children, she was taken away by death, and all his children scattered, but well disposed of among his godly friends."*

In the First Book of Records of First Congregational Church, Roxbury, with the loan of which I have been favored, are entered some verses, occasioned by the death of Mrs. Tompson. They are in the form of a consolatory address, supposed to be made by the deceased wife, from the world of spirits, to her surviving husband. They will be regarded, of course, rather as a curious relic of the past, than as presenting any very strong claims to poetical merit. The lines, however, which are italicised are expressed in natural and simple language, which was uncommon in the metrical attempts of that day.

"An Anagram of Mrs. Tomson, which Mr. [here some words are obliterated in the manuscript] Mr. Tomson to Virginia, she dying in his absence, when he was sent to preach Christ to them.

ABIGAYLL TOMSON.

I am gon to al blys.

The blessed news I send to thee is this,
That I am gone from thee unto all bliss, —
Such as the saints and angels do enjoy,
Whom neither devil, world nor flesh annoy;
The bliss of blisses. I am gone to him,
Who as a bride did for himself me trim.
Thy bride I was, (a most unworthy one,)
But to a better bridegroom I am gone,
Who doth account me worthy of himself,
Though I were never such a worthless elf.
He hath me clad with his own worthiness,
And for the sake thereof he doth me bless.
Thou didst thy part to wash me, but his grace
Hath left no spot nor wrinkle in my face.
Thou little think'st, nor canst at all conceive,
What is the bliss that I do now receive.
When oft I heard thee preach and pray and sing,
I thought that heaven was a most glorious thing.

* Winthrop's N. England, Vol. II. p. 96.

And I believe, if any knew, 't was thou
That knew'st what manner thing it was, but now
I see thou sawest but a glimpse, and hast
No more of heaven, but a little taste
Compared with that which here we see and have,
Nor can'st have more till thou have past the grave.
Thou never told'st me of the tithe, nor yet
The hundredth thousand thousand part of it.
Alas! (dear soul,) how short is all the fame
Of these third heavens where I translated am.
Oh if thou ever loved'st me at all,
Whom thou didst by such loving titles call,
Yea, if thou lovest Christ, as who doth more,
Then do not thou my death too much deplore.
Wring not thy hands, nor sigh, nor cry, nor weep,
Because thine Abigail is fall'n asleep:
'T is but her body, which shall rise again,
In Christ's sweet bosom doth her soul remain.
Mourn not as if thou hast no hope of me,
'T is I, 't is I have cause to pity thee.
O turn thy sighing into songs of praise
Unto the name of God, let all thy days
Be spent in blessing of his grace for this,
That he hath brought me to this place of bliss.
It was a blessed, a thrice blessed snow,
Which to the meeting I then waded through.
When pierced I was upon my naked skin,
Up to the middle the deep snow within,
There never was more happy way I trod,
That brought me home so soon unto my God;
Where we do always hallelujahs sing
Unto that blessed and eternal king,
Where I do look for thee to come ere long
To sing thy part in this most joyful song;
Instead of Braintree church, conducting me
Unto a better church, where now I see
Not sinful men, but Christ, and those that are
Fully exempt from every spot and scar
Of sinful guilt; where I no longer (need)
Or word or seal my feeble soul to (feed),
But face to face I do behold the lamb
That down from heaven for my salvation came,
And hither is ascended up again,
Me to prepare a place wherein to reign."

Mr. Tompson married, for a second wife, Anne, the widow of Symon Crosbie of Cambridge. The date of this second marriage of Mr. Tompson I have not ascertained, but suppose it to have been in 1646 or 1647. Their only child, Anna Tompson, was born March 3, 1648.*

The next notice I have met with of Mr. Tompson is connected with the Synod, which was convened at Cambridge in 1648, and which framed the platform of Church Discipline for our Congregational churches. "Mr. Allen of Dedham preached out of Acts 15, a very godly, learned, and particular handling of near all the doctrines and applications concerning that subject, &c.

"It fell out about the midst of his sermon, there came a snake into the seat, where many of the elders sate behind the preacher. It came in at the door where people stood thick upon the stairs. Divers of the elders shifted from it, but Mr. Tompson, one of the elders of Braintree, a man of much faith, trode upon the head of it, and so held it with his foot and staff with a small pair of grains, until it was killed. This being so remarkable, and nothing falling out but by divine providence, it is out of doubt, the Lord discovered somewhat of his mind in it. The serpent is the devil; the Synod, the representative of the churches of Christ in New England. The devil had formerly and lately attempted their disturbance and dissolution; but their faith in the seed of the woman overcame him, and crushed his head." † — The incident here related so gravely, together with the remarks made upon it by such a man as Winthrop, furnishes a singular illustration of the character of our fathers.

For several years before his death, Mr. Tompson's happiness and usefulness appear to have been destroyed, by a fixed melancholy, probably constitutional, and which amounted at times to mental alienation. He left off his public labors as a preacher, in the year 1659, about seven years before his death.‡

The state of his mind, in the latter portion of his life, doubtless incapacitated him for the management of his temporal affairs, as

* Braintree Register of Births, Deaths, &c. A copy of this old Register was made several years since for President John Adams, and is now in the possession of Hon. John Q. Adams, to whom I am indebted for the use of it.

† Winthrop's New England, Vol. II. p. 330.

‡ This fact I ascertained from one of the old documents, in the archives of the State, so conveniently arranged by Mr. Felt.

well as the discharge of his official duties. In the archives of the State is a document entitled, "A proposal for the issue of the complaints presented by the beloved brethren, the Deacons of the Church of Braintree, in reference to our beloved sister Mrs. Tompson, yet standing member of the Church of Cambridge, drawn up by the Elders and some brethren of that church who had an hearing thereof at Cambridge, October 15, 1661." — This unhappy difference between Mrs. Tompson and the officers of the Braintree Church seems to have continued. After the decease of her husband, she presented a petition, in 1668, to the General Court, in which she complains of certain moneys being witheld, that were due to her husband for his services, and asks for relief, although she "humbly craves, that she may not be interpreted to accuse the Church of acts of any injustice or neglect in the place where she lives." — In this connexion it may be mentioned that in the Dorchester Church Records is the following entry:

"The 26 (1) '65.

"The day abovesaid, at the motion of Mr. Mather, there was a contribution for Mr. Tompson at Braintree, unto which there was given in money £6. 0*s*. 9*d*., besides notes for corn and other things, above 30*s*.; and some more money was added afterwards to the value of 8*s*. 3*d*."

It is not easy to account for Mr. Tompson's becoming so reduced in his circumstances. Johnson, in his "Wonder-working Providence," has a passage which bears upon the subject. "This Town" (he is speaking of the town then recently incorporated at Mount Wollaston, by the name of Braintree) "hath great store of land in tillage, and is at present in a very thriving condition for outward things, although some of Boston retain their farms from being of their Town, yet do they lie within their bounds, and how it comes to pass I know not; *their officers have somewhat short allowance;* they are well stored with cattle and corn, and as a people receives so should they give. The Reverend Mr. Tompson is a man abounding in zeal for the propagation of the gospel, and of an ardent affection, in so much that he is apt to forget himself in things that concern his own good," &c.

And yet from the Report of the Committee,* appointed by the

* See Massachusetts Historical Collections, 3d Series, Vol. I.

General Court, to inquire concerning the maintenance of ministers in the County of Suffolk, it appears that the salary allowed their ministers in Braintree, was, considering the size of the place, quite as good as in the neighboring towns. That Committee, consisting of Thomas Savage, Eleazer Lusher, John Johnson, met 22d of July, 1657. According to their report Hingham, having about one hundred familes, allowed £90 pr. annum. Weymouth, £100 pr. annum, with 60 families. Dorchester, £100, 120 families. Roxbury, to Mr. Elliot and Mr. Danforth each £60, 80 families. Dedham £60, 166 families. Medfield, £50 pr. annum, 40 families. Hull, £40 pr. annum, 20 families. The Report likewise mentions that the mode of raising the salaries in Braintree was by public contribution, and for this reason, perhaps, the amount raised was liable to vary from time to time.

Death at length came to deliver the pastor from his outward straits, and to relieve his mental distress. It is gratifying to be assured, that before his departure, the cloud, that had settled upon him for years, lifted, and he enjoyed a brief season of peace. He died, December 10, 1666; according to his grave-stone, which is still standing in the burying place in this town, with the following inscription: "Here lies buried the body of the Rev. Mr. William Tompson, the first Pastor of Braintrey Church, who deceased December 10, 1666, Ætatis suæ 68.

"He was a learned, solid, sound divine,
Whose name and fame in both England did shine."

Although this is, doubtless, the true date of his death, there is a singular diversity on this point, in contemporary notices of the event, which serves to show how difficult it is to attain to historical exactness, where exactness is of more moment than in the present instance. The Roxbury Church Records, in noticing the event, make it occur the 12th of 10th mo. '66. Hobart's manuscript Journal * has the following entry: "Dec. 9, 1666, Mr. Tompson, minister at Braintree, died 9 day." The Braintree Register of Births, Deaths, &c., Mr. Adams's copy, gives 10th mo. 10, 1666. Mr. Hancock, in a note to one of his Century Discourses gives the date December 10, 1668, which is manifestly a mistake, and probably a misprint.

* Journal of Mr. Peter Hobart, first Minister of Hingham, kindly procured for me, with other old manuscripts, by Solomon Lincoln, Esq. of Hingham.

Mr. Tompson is described by Mather, in his Magnalia, as "a very powerful and successful preacher; and we find his name sometimes joined in the title page of several books, with his countryman, Mr. Richard Mather, as a writer." Since the Discourses in this Pamphlet were written, I have succeeded in finding in the Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society one work, the joint production of these two individuals. It bears the following title: "A modest and brotherly answer to Mr. Charles Herle his Book against the Independency of Churches, wherein his four arguments for the government of Synods over particular Congregations are friendly examined and clearly answered. Together with christian and loving animadversions upon sundry other observable passages in the said Book.

"All tending to declare the true use of Synods, and the power of Congregational Churches, in the points of electing and ordaining their own officers.

"By Richard Mather, Teacher of the church at Dorchester, and William Tompson, Pastor of the Church at Braintry in New-England.

"Sent from thence after the assembly of Elders were dissolved, that last met in Cambridge, to debate matters about church government. London, 1644."

From the Inscription prefixed to this work a quotation has already been made in the first part of the present note.

The children of Mr. Tompson, according to Farmer,* were William, Samuel, Joseph, Benjamin, and a daughter who married William Very. William, if there was a son by this name, which I question, and Samuel must have been born in England. Mr. Savage, in his Edition of Winthrop, says that "the Braintree Records mention the birth of his son Joseph, 1 May, 1640, Benjamin, 14 July, 1642, and the death of his wife in January, 1642." This is manifestly a mistake, and should be 1643, as Farmer has it. I have not been able to find, in Mr. Adams's copy of the Braintree Register, the births or the death mentioned above. The daughter's name was Anna, and she was born 1 mo. 3, 1648.† This was a child by his second wife. The others were the children of his first wife, "his beloved Abigail." — There was a Wm. Thompson graduated

* Farmer's Genealogical Register. † Braintree Register.

at Harvard College, 1653, and him Farmer thinks to have been a a son of the Pastor of Braintree.* He became a preacher and was invited to settle at Springfield, and appears to have been living in 1698. In the Suffolk Probate Records is a Document, entitled, "Articles of agreement between Mrs. Anna Tompson, widow of Mr. Wm. Tompson of Braintree, and Mr. Tompson's children, concerning the estate," &c. In this Document, dated 2 May, 1667, *Samuel* is spoken of as the *oldest son* of Mr. Tompson, and no William is mentioned. This leads me to think that Farmer was in an error on this point. Samuel was a Deacon of the Braintree Church. He was married to Sarah Shepard, 25 April, 1656, by Mr. Brown of Watertown.† He was voted town Clerk in the year 1690.‡ The same year he made the following entry: "Samuel Tompson sen., who is aged, the 16th Feb. 1690, 60 years, recorded his children which he had, by Sarah his wife," &c. § It appears then that he was born himself in the year 1630, and was about 7 years of age when his father emigrated to New England. His death is noticed thus; "Samuel Tompson sen., Deacon of Br. Church, for 16 years, and standing elected for a ruling elder, died, 18 June, 1695 Æt. 64 yrs."|| He was also Representative 14 years.¶ His grave stone is to be seen in our burying ground. Edward Tompson, ordained minister of Marshfield, 14 Oct. 1696, was son of the preceding, and not of Benjamin, as Farmer asserts.

"Joseph, son of the Rev. Wm. Tompson, was born at Braintree, 1 May, 1640, married Mary Brackett, 24 July, 1662, and soon after settled in Billerica, where he was a schoolmaster, captain, selectman, town clerk, deacon of the church many years, and in 1699, 1700, and 1701, a representative to the General Court. He died, 13 Oct. 1732, Æ. 92."**

Benjamin, son of the Rev. Wm. Tompson, was born at Braintree, 14 July, 1642, and graduated at Harvard College, 1662.†† He was town Clerk of Braintree in 1696. He kept a school in this town many years. He was a poet, and "author of the verses in praise of Whiting, which are, probably," says the Editor of Winthrop,‡‡ "the best in the Magnalia." His death is thus mentioned in the Brain-

* Geneal. Register. † Braintree Register. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. || Ibid.
¶ Farmer's Geneal. Register ** Ibid. †† Ibid.
‡‡ Winthrop's N. England, Savage's Note to p. 313. Vol. I.

tree Register: "Mr. Benj. Tompson, practitioner of physic for above 30 years, during which time he kept a grammar school in Boston, Charleston, and Braintree, having left behind him a weary world, 8 children, 28 grand-children, deceased 13 April, 1714. And lieth buried in Roxbury, Æt. 72. Benjamin, the youngest son of Rev. Wm. Tompson, by his beloved Abigail, who died while Mr. Tompson was in Virginia with the Rev. Mr. Knowles."

Whether Mr. Tompson's first wife, who died in his absence, was buried in Braintree, I do not know. There is no stone remaining here to her memory. His second wife died Oct. 11, 1675, and lies buried beside him.*

"It is supposed," says Mr. Savage, "that the celebrated Benjamin Tompson, Count Rumford, was descended from this first Pastor of Braintree."† It is not agreeable to be obliged to question the statement, but Farmer has traced the Count's descent from a different family, and who will dispute with Farmer on such a point?

Mr. Tompson died intestate. There is in the Suffolk Probate Office an inventory of his effects,‡ which corresponds too closely with Mather's lines:

> "Braintree was of this Jewel then possest,
> Until himself he labored into rest,
> His *Inventory* then, with John's was took;
> A *rough Coat, girdle,* with the sacred Book."

K. Page 40.

The account given by Mather, in his Magnalia, of Mr. Henry Flint (or Flynt, as it is found most frequently spelt) is very meagre. It amounts to but little more than that his reverence for John Cotton was so great, that, having twins, he called one of them John, and the other Cotton. According to Johnson, he arrived here in the year 1635. "He was admitted of Boston Church, 15 November, this year (1635) a fortnight after Vane."§ In a manuscript

* Braintree Register. † Savage's Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 313 note.

‡ The old Suffolk County, it will be remembered, included Braintree.

§ Winthrop's N. England, Savage's Edition, p. 169. Vol. I., note.

Journal of Rev. Josiah Flynt, son of the first Teacher of Braintree,* I find the following entry: "Mr. Henry Flint came to New England 2, (12)m. 1635." I know not how to reconcile this with the date of his admission into the Boston church, except by supposing that by the 12th mo. (which was February) was intended that which closed the year 1634, according to the computation then in use. And I am confirmed in this supposition, by what is added, namely, "was ordained Teacher of the church of Braintree 1640." He was in fact ordained, 17 March, 1639–40. This part of the manuscript was, I suppose, written by Henry Flynt, Esq. The year then commenced, it will be borne in mind, with March, so that February closed the year, instead of being, as now, the second month of a new year.

From what part of England Mr. Flynt came can be known only by inference. Thomas Flynt, of Concord, says Farmer, "brother of the Rev. Henry Flynt, came from Matlock in Derbyshire, and settled in Concord, in 1637."† We may take for granted, therefore, that the minister of Braintree came from the same place. He was admitted Freeman,‡ 25 May, 1636. During the Antinomian excitement, he seems to have favored the new views, perhaps out of deference to Mr. Cotton, whom he is said to have admired so much; and if so, he followed the example of Cotton still further, and evinced his prudence, by abjuring the doctrine of Mr. Wheelwright, when he and his principal friends had been obliged to leave the colony. "There is entered," says Mr. Savage, § "so late as 13 May, 1640, the submission of Mr. Henry Flynt. But the victory over him was well deserving of notice, as he was a distinguished young man, then chosen minister at Braintree, where his settlement, which should have taken place at the same time with Tompson's, 24 Sept. 1639,‖ was delayed till 17 March after. No doubt this postponement was, to afford him liberal opportunity for this recantation." And it will be perceived by the following extract from the "Wonder-working

* This manuscript belonged to the Rev. Dr. Holmes, the American Annalist, and is now in the hands of his widow, from whom it was procured for my use by the kindness of Miss Quincy.

† Farmer's Genealogical Register. ‡ Ibid.

§ Winthrop, Savage's Edition, Vol. I. p. 247.

‖ This date is a mistake. Winthrop gives the date of Tompson's ordination, Nov. 19, 1639. Vol. I. p. 324.

Providence," that Mr. Flynt was honored as one of the instruments for correcting the heterodoxy that had prevailed at the Mount, in the time of Wheelwright. "They had formerly one Mr. Wheelwright to preach unto them, (till this government could no longer contain them,) they, many of them, in the mean time, belonging to the Church of Christ in Boston, but after his departure, they gathered into a church themselves; having some enlargement of land, they began to be well peopled, calling to office among them, the reverend and godly Mr. Wm. Tompson, and Mr. Henry Flynt, the one to the office of a Pastor, the other of a Teacher; the people are purged, by their industry, from the sour leven of those sinful opinions that began to spread, and if any remain among them, it is very covert." *

It has been mentioned, in another place, that he had a grant of 80 acres of land at the Mount, made to him by the town of Boston, in the year 1639–40.† And again is the following: "29th, 5th mo. 1644. The land within the common fence at Braintry, near the Knight's Neck, belonging to Boston, is hereby sold unto ——— Matson, James Penniman, Moses Payne, Francis Eliot, for 5*s*. per. acre, be it more or less, to be paid in corn or cattle, within one month, into the hands of Mr. Henry Flynt, of Braintry, for his own use, on consideration of his late great loss, through the hand of God's Providence, by fire." ‡

Mr. Flynt is not spoken of, by any of the historians who mention him, as an author, nor have I been able to discover anything in his hand-writing, or in that of his associate, the Pastor of Braintree Church. Mr. Hancock has the remark: "During the time of Mr. Tompson's and Mr. Flynt's ministry, there were 204 adult members of this church. I have also a record, in Mr. Flynt's manuscripts, of baptisms from April 30, 1643, to March 1, 1667–8, though I am jealous there were some omissions; the whole number amounts to 408. I cannot find any account of baptisms in the time of vacancy between Mr. Flynt's death and Mr. Fiske's settlement." §

The manuscripts which Mr. Hancock refers to above are not now, and have never been in the possession of either of the present ministers of the church. In a conversation with Dr. Harris, formerly the respected Pastor of Dorchester First Congregational Church, I un-

* Johnson's Wonder-working Providence. † Boston old Town Rec.
‡ Boston old Town Records. § Hancock's Century Sermon.

derstood him to say that Mr. Welde, formerly Pastor of what is now Braintree Church, had those records in his possession; but when he obtained them, and for what purpose, was not explained. They are probably now irrecoverably lost. As curious and interesting relics of old times, their loss must be regretted.

Mr. Flynt died, 27 April, 1668, having survived the Pastor, Mr. Tompson, a little over a year and four months, and his remains lie in our burying ground. A stone over them bears the following inscription: "Here lies interred the body of the Rev. Mr. Henry Flynt, who came to New England in the year 1635: was ordained the first Teacher of the Church of Braintrey, 1639, and died, April 27, 1668. He had the character of a gentleman remarkable for his piety, learning, wisdom, and fidelity in his office. By him, on his right hand, lies the body of Margery, his beloved consort, who died, March 1686–7. Her maiden name was Hoar. She was a gentlewoman of piety, prudence, and peculiarly accomplished for instructing young gentlewomen; many being sent to her from other towns, especially from Boston. They descended from ancient and good families in England."

This inscription, I suspect, was written in Mr. Hancock's time, perhaps by Mr. Hancock himself. He says in a note to one of his Century Discourses: "Mr. Flynt's monument is still to be seen, though much gone to decay, but I hope to see the tomb of the prophet rebuilt." * This note, taken in connexion with the modern style of the inscription, leads me to infer that the old inscription had been effaced by time, and that this was composed anew or at least re-written. The age of Mr. Flynt, at his death, is not given on his tomb stone. But in the Roxbury First Church Records, there is entered a notice of the event in these words:

"27, 2m., '68. Mr. Henry Flynt, Teacher to the church at Braintrey, aged 61, deceased." He was, therefore, about 32 years of age when he was settled in Braintree, and eight or nine years younger than the Pastor. The following is a notice of his death by his son Josiah: "On 27, 2m., 1668, it pleased the Lord to take away my honored father, Mr. Henry Flynt, Teacher of the church of Braintrey." †

The date of Mrs. Flynt's decease, which is not given in full, in

* Hancock's Century Disc. p. 24. † Rev. Josiah Flynt's MS. Journal.

the inscription upon the stone, is thus settled by contemporary manuscripts. "Mrs. Margery Flynt died, 10 March, 1686–7, about 6 of the clock in the morning, and was buried the 12th." "1687, March 10, Mrs. Flynt deceased at Braintree, Thursday." *

Morton, in his Memorial, makes respectful mention of Mr. Flynt, as "a man of known piety, gravity, and integrity, and well accomplished with other qualifications fit for the work of the ministry."

Mr. Flynt's children † were as follows, viz. Dorothy, born July 21, 1642; Annah, born Sept. 11, 1643; Josiah, born. Aug. 24, 1645; Margaret, born June 20, 1647; Joanna, born Feb. 18, 1648; David, born Jan. 11, 1651; Seth, born April 2, 1653; Ruth, born Jan. 31, 1654; Cotton and John, born Sept. 16, 1656. Of these, Margaret, David, and the twins, Cotton and John, died in infancy. Dorothy was married to Mr. Samuel Shepperd, minister of Rowley, and son of Rev. Thos. Shepperd of Cambridge, April 30, 1666, by Capt. Gookins. Annah, or Hannah, which is doubtless the same, was married to John Dassitt, Nov. 15, 1662, by Major Millar. Joanna was married to Mr. Noah Numan (Newman), probably son of Rev. Samuel Newman, minister of Rehoboth, and his successor there in the ministry. They were married, Dec. 30, 1669, by Capt. Gookins. Seth and Ruth were, one about 15 and the other 14 years old, when their father died. Josiah ‡ graduated at Harvard College, 1664, preached some time in Braintree, after his father's decease, and was ordained at Dorchester, 27 Dec. 1671, and died 16 Sept. 1680, aged 35. To his manuscript journal I have before referred. The three first pages of said manuscript contain a family record in different hands, partly by himself, and partly perhaps by his son, Tutor Flynt. His widow, Mrs. Esther Flynt, § died July 26, 1737, aged 89, and was buried at Braintry. Henry Flynt, Esq. ‖ son of Rev. Josiah Flynt, died Feb. 13, 1760, aged 85 years. He had been a Tutor in Harvard University upwards of fifty-five years, and about sixty years a Fellow of the Corporation, familiarly called *Father Flynt*. He was never settled in the ministry, but preached as occasion required; and he published a volume of sermons, which were received acceptably by the public. He lived a bachelor, and

* Rev. Josiah Flynt's manuscript Journal and Hobart's Diary.

† Braintree Reg. ‡ Farmer's Gen. Reg. § Josiah Flynt's MS. Diary.

‖ This account of Tutor Flynt is taken from Peirce's Hist. of Harv. Univ.

was noted for his facetiousness and humor mingled with gravity. It was proposed in some parish to invite him to take the pastoral charge of it; but objections were made to him on the ground, that he was believed not to be orthodox. Being informed of this judgment of the good people respecting his religion, he coolly observed, "I thank God they know nothing about it." In his last sickness, Dr. Appleton asked him, if he was entirely willing to leave the world. "No," said he, "I cannot say that I am"; but after a short pause, he added, "I don't care much about it." A room is still shown, in the house now owned and occupied in this town by Daniel Greenleaf, Esq., which goes by the name of Flynt's study, and which was used as such by him, when Judge Edmund Quincy, who married Dorothy, the sister of Tutor Flynt, occupied the house. There is, in the possession of President Quincy, of Harvard University, a manuscript diary of Tutor Flynt, and likewise a table, proved to be his by having a single drawer, exactly of a size to admit said diary.

It has already been stated, that the maiden name of the wife of Rev. Henry Flynt of Braintree was Hoar. She was probably sister of President Hoar. Mistress Joanna Hoar,* probably their mother, died a widow at Braintree, Dec. 21, 1664. "Leonard Hoar,† the third President of Harvard College, at which he graduated, in 1650, went to England, was a physician and clergyman, and settled as the latter, at Wensted, in Essex. He was ejected from office for nonconformity, and returned to New England, 1672, and in July was elected president, but resigned, 15 March, 1675, and died at Braintree, 28 Nov. same year. His widow, a daughter of Lord Lisle, married Mr. Usher, of Boston, and died 25 May, 1723." She is thus spoken of by Mr. Hancock: "His aged and pious relict, the late Madam Usher, was brought hither from Boston, and interred in the same grave, May 30, 1723, according to her desire."‡ The monument over their remains still stands in our burying ground, and bears this inscription:

"Three precious friends under this tomb-stone lie,
Patterns to aged, youth, and infancy.
A great mother, her learned son, with child;
The first and least went free, he was exil'd.

* Braintree Register. † Farmer's Gen. Reg. ‡ Hancock's Cent. Disc.

In love to Christ, this country, and dear friends,
He left his own, cross'd seas, and for amends
Was here extoll'd, envied, all in a breath,
His noble consort leaves, is drawn to death.
Strange changes may befall us ere we die,
Blest they who well arrive eternity.
God grant some names, O thou New England's friend,
Don't sooner fade than thine, if times don't mend."

There is contained in the Mass. Historical Collections a letter, dated March 27, 1661, from Dr. Leonard Hoar, then in England, to Josiah Flint, his nephew, at that time about 15 years of age, and a Freshman in Harvard College. Edmund Quincy and Joanna Hoar, (probably a sister of Dr. Hoar and of Mr. Flynt's wife,) were married, July 26, 1648.*

Mr. Flynt, the teacher of Braintree church, was possessed of a comfortable estate for those times. He made a will, a copy of which I have taken from the Suffolk Probate office.

"The Will of Henry Flynt, the 24th day of 11th mo. (January) 1652.†

"Concerning my children and estate. 1. Until my wife or any of the children marry, I leave all my estate in the power and to the wisdom and discretion of my wife for her comfort and bringing up of the children. 2. If she should be called away by death, before the children be grown to take some care of themselves, and of one another, then I leave it to her wisdom to make choice of the next person to whom she may commit the care of children and estate. 3. To my son Josias I give my dwelling house, with those two lots it stands upon, which I bought of Richard Wright and Mr. Moses Paine deceased, together with all that land of mine now in the occupation of Wm. Vezie, after the decease of his mother. 4. I give to my son Seth, my great lot, and half my books, if it please God to make him a scholar. 5. If he be brought up to some other course of life, then his brother Josias to have them all, and to allow him for half in some pay suitable to his condition. 6. To my daughters, I appoint each of them an hundred pounds, if my estate will reach it. 7. If any of my children marry whilst my wife doth live and continueth unmarried, I leave it to her wisdom what por-

* Braintree Register. † Probate Records, Vol. VI. p. 14.

tion to give at present, though I intend that finally all my young children should be made equal. 8. For the present, I know not what portion of my estate to assign to my wife, in case God call her to marriage, otherwise than as the law of the country does provide in that case, accounting all that I have too little for her, if I had something else to bestow upon my children."

"Richard Brackett, æt. 56 years, or thereabouts, deposed saith, that about four days before the late Mr. Henry Flynt departed this life, himself and Mrs. Joanna Quinsey being with him, they heard him say he had made and written his Will, which being now produced under Mr. Flynt's own hand, which they well knew to be so, and the sum and substance thereof he himself repeated to them, only said that his son Josias being grown up should be his Executor, with his wife Executrix.

"Taken upon oath by the said Richard Brackett before the Governor, Capt. Gookin; and recorded 2 July, 1668, who allowed of the Will hereby proved.

"Edward Rawson."

In the absence of anything else, either written or printed, from the pen of Mr. Flynt, I have thought the above Will might be inserted here as a relic of old times.

L. Page 43.

"After the decease both of the Pastor and Teacher," observes Mr. Hancock, "the church fell into unhappy divisions, one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, (as is too often the case in destitute churches,) and were without a settled ministry above four years, viz. from April 27, 1668, to Sept. 11, 1672."*

The following extract, from the manuscript of Rev. Josiah Flynt, before alluded to, may help to explain the causes of the dissensions which continued for so long a time.

* Hancock's Cent. Discourse.

"On 6. 3mo. 1668.* Persons (D. B. and U. Q.†) came to me to desire me from several of the church, though not from the whole, to exercise in Braintree church.

"On 10. 3mo. '68. The Elder came to me to go to meeting, but went away before, and made a proposition to the church whether they were willing I should preach. Many uncomfortable expressions passed about, but at last Deacon Bass and D. El.‡ came, in the name of the church, to desire me to come and preach, to which not knowing any thing I yielded.

"On 11. 3mo. The church set apart a day to seek the Lord by fasting and prayer.

"On 13. 4mo. I preached again in Braintree.

"On 26. 4mo. The church passed a vote to call Mr. Woodw:§ and me to probation.

"On 14. 5mo. Mr. Eliott, Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Stoughton, and Mr. Torry came, being desired by the church to give advice about the vote.

"20. 5mo. The vote of the church was brought to me, in the name of the church, by Deacon Bass, Capt. Brackett, Mr. Paine, Mr. Quinsey, Goodman Faxon.

"27. 5mo. The Messengers came to me again, and brought the vote the Elders' letter.

"23. 6mo. The Elders forementioned sent a letter to the church, which was read publicly.

"6. 9mo. The church set apart.

"13. 9mo. The church had a meeting.

"16. 9mo. The messengers of the church came for a determinate answer.

"17. 9mo. The church of Christ at Cambridge village sent me a call.

"23. 9mo. Messengers came from Cambridge village for my answer.

"26. 9mo. I gave an answer to N. Town‖ in writing.

"29. I gave my answer to Braintree church according to the vote.

* It will be remembered, that March was the first month of the year.

† These abbreviations probably stand for Deacon Bass or Brackett and Uncle Quinsey.

‡ Deacon Eliot, probably. § Woodward, perhaps.

‖ The ancient name of Cambridge was Newtown.

"13. 10mo. I engaged to help the church wholly for the winter.

"12. 12mo. The church had a meeting.

"28. 1mo. 1669. Being a Sabbath day, the church had a very uncomfortable debate after a solemn admonition.

"9. 2mo. 1669. Deacon B.* and Goodman Sheaf came to speak with me.

"11. 2mo. I gave a full answer to the church at Cambridge village.

"24. 2mo. I gave in answer to the church, that I desired relief, being oppressed in body and mind.

"6. 3mo. '69. The church had a meeting.

"22. 3mo. Many if not most of the church went away to Milton to hear Mr. Th.†

"20. 4mo. Being a Sabbath day, there was a very uncomfortable debate in the church.

"18. 5mo. Some of the brethren desired a time of solemn seeking of God jointly by fasting and prayer: it was denied.

"23. 5mo. Some of the church set apart a day of fasting and prayer. This day there was an awful division.

"25. 5mo. God sent a very solemn, awakening message to the church by Mr. Eliot from 6. Jer. 29. 30.

"The honored Major Lusher‡ and Rd. Mr. Allin sent letters to the church to advise them to unity and peace, certifying the thoughts of some of the Elders to send in a council uncalled for.

"2. 6mo. '69. The church had a meeting, disannulled their last vote, and passed a new vote.

"They sent Deacon Bass, Mr. Q.§ Goodman Bel:‖ and Faxon to desire my help constantly. I deferred my answer. Deacon Bass, Mr. Paine, and Mr. Quinsey went to carry the vote of the church to Mr. B.¶ Mr. Bulkley delayed his answer till the commencement, 10. 6mo. '69, and then desired further time.

"22. 6mo. Mr. Bulkley came to us.

"8. 7mo. '69. The whole town met to consider what they would allow.

"3. 9mo. The church had a meeting.

"15. 9mo. The church had a meeting, and concluded to allow

* Deacon Bass, probably. † Mr. Thatcher, probably.

‡ This person belonged to Dedham, and was prominent in his day.

§ Quinsey. ‖ Belcher. ¶ Bulkley.

60 pounds pr. annum to each, and the use of the town land for a pasture. The Elder with the greatest part of the church came to certify us of it.

"16. 11mo. The church stayed after meeting, and agreed to meet on 6th day following.

"21. 11mo. The church met and acknowledged several things scandalous and offensive, one to another.

"7. 12mo. I helped the church again wholly for a while.

"1. 1mo. 1670. The church (moved by Mr. Bulkley) set apart a day for public prayer and fasting.

"28. 1mo. The church had a meeting, and passed an act of election for Mr. Bulkley and me. Deacon Bass, Mr. Paine, Mr. Quinsey, and Goodman Belcher came as messengers to us, but said nothing of the matter of the vote, for it was not single.

"31. 1mo. The messengers came to Mr. Bulkley and afterward to me. We jointly desired time to consider.

"3. 2mo. 1670. The church of Dedham writ a letter, and chose messengers to come and inquire in this church's state the next S.*

"19. 2mo. I gave my judgment, if not my answer, to the vote, it being proposed to me in general by the Elders. Dedham messengers hearing what was done by the church on 28. 1mo. were prevented coming this day to us.

"20. 2mo. Some of the church (having heard of a writing given by their brethren and accepted by Mr. B.,† which raised a strong jealousy in them that they had engaged him to themselves) sent a messenger, Capt. Brackett, to certify Mr. B. how the matter stood.

"Letters were sent to Dedham, Cambridge, Roxbury, Weymouth, to this purpose:

"'Rd. and Beld. As we presume you have not been wholly ignorant of or void of sympathy with us in our distress,‡ ——

"24. 2mo. Mr. Eliott preached here, and prevented much evil intended.

"12. 3mo. The Question about the vote was by Mr. Bulkley propounded to the Elders.

"15. 3mo. Mr. Phil.§ helped the church, and so moderated their spirits.

* Sabbath, probably.

† Bulkley, probably.

‡ The letter missive is left in the manuscript incomplete.

§ Phillips, perhaps.

"31. 3mo. The church had a meeting, and concluded jointly to send to six churches for their messengers.

"5. 4mo. The church had debate, wherein much provocation to God and each other did appear. They sent to Mr. Bulkley, but he refused to come, till the meeting of the Council was over."

It seems, also, by a document contained in the manuscript journal of Mr. Josiah Flynt, that he had been harged, by certain of the brethren of Braintree church, with uttering "divers dangerous heterodoxies, delivered, and that without caution, in his public preaching." The matter was referred to several highly respected individuals, who vindicate him from the charge which was brought against him.

Mr. Flynt received a call from Dorchester, and was settled over the church in that town, in the year 1670. He died there in 1680.

Mr. Peter Bulkley, who was candidate at the same time with Mr. Flynt, was probably a son of the first minister of Concord.

M. Pages 44, 45.

Moses Fiske, it has already been stated, was the son of Mr. John Fiske, the first minister of Wenham and Chelmsford. His father was born in England in 1601, and was educated at Cambridge. He came to this country in 1637, bringing with him a large property. He lived three years at Salem, preaching to the church, and instructing a number of young persons. When a church was gathered in Enon, or Wenham, Oct. 8, 1644, he was settled there as minister. In 1656 he removed to Chelmsford, then a new town, with the majority of his church. He died, Jan. 14, 1677. He was a skilful physician, as well as an excellent minister.*

The occasion and reasons of Mr. Moses Fiske's first visit to Braintree, with an account of the formation of the connexion that resulted from it, are given below, as I find them recorded in his own hand-writing.†

* See Allen's Biographical Dictionary, and Mather's Magnalia.

† Braintree Church Records. Book 1.

"Being ordered by the Court, and advised by the reverend Elders and other friends, I went up from the honored Mr. Edwd. Tyng's, with two of the brethren of this church, sent to accompany me (2. 10 mo., 1671) being the Saturday, to preach God's word unto them, a transcript of which order, &c. follows verbatim.

"At a County Court held at Boston, by adjournment, the 23d of Nov. 1671. The Court having taken into consideration the many means that have been used with the Church of Braintree, and hitherto nothing done to effect, as to the obtaining the ordinances of Christ amongst them, this Court therefore orders and desires Mr. Moses Fiske to improve his labors in preaching the word at Braintree, until the Church there agree and obtain supply for the work of the ministry, or this court take further order. This a true copy, as

"Attest, Freegrace Bendall, *Clerk.*

"3. 10. 71. After evening exercise was ended, I apologized as to my coming, &c.

"4. 10. 71. About 20 of the brethren came to visit at Mr. Flynt's, manifesting (in the name of the church) their ready acceptance of what the Honored Court had done, (having received and perused their order, with letters sent to their Townsmen respecting their duty towards their minister,) and thanking me for my compliance therewith.

"24. 12. 71. The Church, by their messengers (Capt. Brackett, Lieut. Quinsey, Deacon Bass, John Doscet, sen., Gregory Belchar, Will. Veazy, sen., Saml. Tompson) did jointly and unanimously desire my settlement amongst them, and that in order to office.

"14. 2. 72. Having advised, I gave the church, after evening exercise was finished, (being often urged thereto,) an answer of acceptance, through God's assistance, understanding the concurrence of the neighbors which was partly expressed, partly tacit.

"5. 3. 72. The Church passed a vote of Election (3 or 4 suspending, who after acceptance, &c., manifested their hearty concurrence).

"18. 6. 72. This day joined with this church, (having obtained letters of recommendation and dismission from the Church of Christ at Chelmsford, by means of Capt. Brackett and Deac. Eliot sent to that end,) Deacon Bass being desired pro tempore to be the mouth of the Church. Also I gave my answer of acceptance to their call to office, the Rev. Elders and others advising and often renewing their request to that end.

"11. 7. 72. This was the day of my solemn espousals to this Church and Congregation, being elected to the office of a Pastor to them. The churches present, by their messengers, were these; three at Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Weymouth, six churches. Mr. Eliot prayed and gave the charge; Mr. Oxenbridge and the Deacons joined in the laying on hands; Mr. Thatcher gave the right hand of fellowship. Dep. Gov. Leverit, Mr. Danforth, Mr. Tynge, and Mr. Stoughton were present."

In the Town Records,* in connexion with the subject of providing a house for the Minister, a vote is found directing that a bargain with Mr. Samuel Tompson should be concluded for his house, orchard, &c., and then the following:

"At the same Town meeting (18 June, 1672) it was voted that the town of Braintree would give to Mr. Moses Fiske the just sum of £60 in money, as by a town rate, and he to make provision for himself as housing, or else to live in a town house provided for the ministry. And the house and land bought by the town, of brother Saml. Tompson, being about 5 acres and a half, or 6 acres, to be fenced, and housing set in good repair."

And again the following:

"1674, Oct. 26. At a public town meeting it was voted and consented to by the major vote, that our Pastor, Mr. Moses Fiske, should have £80 for this year — 74, in wood part and corn, at the country rate price,† which was barley 4*s.*, pease 4*s.*, Indian 3*s.*, malt 4*s.*"

"Mr. Fiske died here, Aug. 10, 1708, in the 66th year of his age, and 36th of his pastorate. In the time of his ministry 147 members were added to the church, including himself. Baptisms 779. No baptisms recorded in the time of vacancy." ‡ On his tomb stone, which is still standing in our burying place, is this inscription:

"Braintree! Thy prophet's gone, this tomb inters
The Rev. Moses Fiske his sacred herse.
Adore heaven's praiseful art that formed the man,
Who souls not to himself, but Christ oft won:
Sail'd through the straits with Peter's family,
Renown'd, and Gaius' hospitality,
Paul's patience, James's prudence, John's sweet love,
Is landed, enter'd, clear'd, and crown'd above."

* Braintree Town Records, Book I.

† "Country rate;" that is, the rate at which the articles specified were taken in payment of taxes.

‡ Hancock's Cent. Disc.

His will and an inventory of his estate I have found in the Suffolk Probate Records.

Mr. Fiske was twice married. His first marriage is thus recorded : *

"Mr. Moses Fiske of Braintree and Mrs. Sarah Symmes, daughter of Mr. Wm. Symmes of Charleston, married 9, 7 mo. 1671 by Capt. Gookin, assistant." By this wife, he was favored with fourteen children, whose names, and the dates of whose births are thus recorded : †

"The names of the children of Rev. Mr. Moses Fiske, by Mrs. Sarah, his wife, entered 29 Jany., 1695 – 6, viz.

Mrs. Mary	born	25 Aug., 1673.
" Sarah	"	22 Sept., 1674.
" Martha	"	25 Nov., 1675, and died 28 same mo.
" Anna	"	17 Aug., 1677, died 9 June, '78.
" Ann	"	29 Oct., 1678.
" Elizabeth	"	9 " 1679.
Mr. John	"	29 May, 1681, died, 5 Aug., same yr.
" Moses	"	19 July, 1682.
" John	"	26 Nov., 1684.
" William	"	2 Aug., 1686.
" Samuel	"	19 Feb., 1687, died 4 March.
" "	"	6 Apr., 1689.
Mrs. Ruth	"	24 Mar., 1692, died 6 June.
Mr. Edward	"	20 Oct., 1692, died 25 of the same.

Mrs. Sarah, wife of Mr. Moses Fiske, died 2 Dec. 1692. Mr. Fiske's second wife was Mrs. Anna Quinsey. She was the daughter of the Rev. Thos. Shepard of Charlestown.‡ Their marriage is thus recorded : "Rev. Moses Fiske and Mrs. Anna Quinsey married 7 Jany. 1700 by Samuel Sewall Esq."§ — By her he had two children, namely, Mr. Shepard, son of Rev. Moses Fiske and Anna, born 19 April, 1703, and Mrs. Margaret, born 16 Dec. 1705. Mr. Fiske's second wife died, 24 July, 1708, less than three weeks before his own decease.

Of Mr. Fiske's children, it will be seen by the list already given, six died in infancy. The eldest daughter, Mary, married Rev. Joseph Baxter, minister of Medfield, and a native of Braintree.

* Braintree Reg. † Ibid. ‡ Fairfield's Diary. § Braintree Reg.

Sarah is mentioned in her father's will, as "late consort of Rev. Thos. Ruggles." Ann Fiske was married to Rev. Joseph Marsh,* the successor of her father in Braintree, by Colonel Edmund Quinsey, Esq., 30 June, 1709. Elizabeth is called in the will, Elizabeth Porter. Of Moses and William I find no account; and nothing respecting John, with the exception of his admission to the church, 26, 6 mo. 1705. In Fairfield's Diary, it will be seen that a John Fiske preached in Braintree in 1710, and there graduated at Harvard College one of this name in 1702. Samuel graduated at Harvard College in 1708. He was chosen, says Mr. Lincoln,† 11 Feb. 1716–17, minister of Hingham, as successor to Mr. Norton, but did not see fit to accept. He was ordained over the First Church in Salem, Oct. 8, 1718, and was afterwards minister of the Third Church in Salem, and died 7 April, 1770, aged 81.

Shepard, son of Mr. Fiske by his second wife, was "graduated at Harvard College 1721, was a physician at Killingly, Conn. and at Bridgewater, Mass., died 14 June, 1779, Æ. 77.‡ Margaret Fiske was married to Rev. Nathan Bucknam of Medway, January 23, 1727–8, by Mr. Hancock."

I do not know that any of Mr. Fiske's writings were ever published. He preached the sermon before the Artillery Company, on the day of their annual election, June 4, 1694, and the original sermon, in the hand-writing of the author, is in the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The text is taken from Eph. vi. 14: "Stand (therefore)." The preacher applies the text to the spiritual warfare which every Christian must carry on in this world under his great Captain General, Jesus Christ.

A passage taken from the conclusion of this discourse will answer as a specimen.

"Take the whole armor of God, put it on, wear it and use it. You'll need every piece of it. You cannot stand without it; the girdle of truth, breastplate of righteousness, &c., that you may withstand, and having done all may stand; stand so. See that you stand true and faithful to Jesus Christ and to his word. Keep the word of his patience. Stand by the Gospel ministry, for by it the powers of darkness are vanquished and kingdom of Satan destroyed. This opens a magazine of arms and furniture for your

* Braintree Register. † History of Hingham. ‡ Farmer's Gen. Reg.

souls. God's word is the Tower of David, wherein there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of the mighty.

"What remains but that you, Gentlemen Soldiers, my fellow soldiers in the spiritual warfare, who have called me to this work, and desired to inquire of God this day, be true to the Captain of your salvation, your Lord and ours. Take courage and go on in your military discipline, that you may be as those children that resemble their Captain and their King; like those that could handle the sword, and were expert in war. This Captain of salvation, who is the Prince of peace, is a man of war; the art military is of God. This art is taught by him who is the Captain of the Lord's Host. 'Tis observable that some of the most renowned worthies in the spiritual warfare have been expert commanders in the art military. Abraham had his trained soldiers. Moses, the Captain of the wilderness, led the Israelites and kept them in a military posture. And David, who was a man after God's own heart, was a brisk and brave commander. Labor for the courage, skill, and conduct, which may make able and expert soldiers and commanders, and read Ps. cxlvii. 7, 8.

"Finally, Be strong, O Zerubbabel, be strong O Joshua; be strong, O all ye Christian soldiers; watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men; be strong; be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Let me add this word, and I have done. You that are the Governors of Judah, and those of the tribe of Levi, my brethren and fathers, who are set for the defence of the Gospel, you all that have listed under the Lord Jesus, your leader in the Christian warfare, of what calling and employment soever, lift up your heads, and go on manfully, and prosecute this holy war against the enemies of God and your souls; fight it out to the last; that when you come to die, you may with that great warrior be able to say: 'we have fought a good fight, we have finished our course, we have kept the faith; henceforth is laid up a crown of righteousness which God shall give,' &c. Amen."

It is rather a singular fact, and this seems to be the place to mention it, that in the Inventory of Mr. Fiske's estate, one item is as follows: "His armor."

Fairfield's Diary has been already alluded to. It was presented to the Library of the Historical Society, by Rev. Dr. Harris. The author of the Diary appears to have been a mason by trade. The

manuscript consists of memoranda respecting the places where he worked, and notices of such events and occurrences as seemed important to the writer. It does not contain much of any great value. But the true antiquary, like the true lover of the angle, makes much of a nibble in the waters of the past, if he can catch no fish. And so I give an extract from said Diary. It runs forward, as will be observed, a little distance into Mr. Marsh's ministry.

"1697, May 13. A fasting day, our Church in Braintree renewed Covenant.

"Dec. 17. I watched with Mr. Quinsey.

"1697–8, Jany. 8. Mr. Quinsey died, a pious and godly man, a Justice of the Peace for this County, and Lt. Col. of this Reg.

"Jan. 10. Helped dig Mr. Quinsey's grave, frost is one and near two feet thick.

"Jan. 11. Made an end of digging, bricked the grave — weather warm.

"Jan. 12. Mr. Quinsey decently buried — three foot companies and one troop at his funeral.

"1697–8, April. We, in Braintree, chose a Committee to seat persons in the meeting house. Deacon Wales, Deacon Bass, Mr. Hobart, Martin Saunders, John Ruggles, sen. They did the work, though not to general satisfaction. The first Sabbath in April people took their places, as many as saw good so to do.

"1699, Sept. 16. I carted stones for Mr. Quinsey's tomb.

"Sept. 19. " " " "

"As to this Sept. past I did not hear of any great matter, only the woods swarmed much with bears — many were killed, and more escaped.

"Oct. 5. Went to Boston to lecture. Mr. Fiske preached.

"1699–1700, Jan. 1. Very cold — old Lawrence Copeland buried, aged 100 yrs., who died last Saty., Dec. 30.

"March 23. Mended Doctor Hoar's monument.

"June 19. Meeting to nominate deacons.

"Novem. 30. Among ourselves died several, the most considerable of whom was Mrs. Elizabeth Quinsey, widow of Lt. Col. Edmd. Quinsey Esq., she was sick many weeks and underwent much sorrow and dolor; and after all fell asleep quietly in the Lord, and was with great solemnity interred, Dec. 5, 1700.

"1700–1, Jan. 7. Mr. Fiske married to Mrs. Anna Quinsey.

"Jan. 8. I was at Mr. Fiske's, he brought home his bride.

"Jan. 26. A day of fasting and prayer in Braintree. Mr. Wales ordained a ruling elder of the Church in Braintree.

"1704, July 9. Sabbath, Mr. Fiske sick, Mr. Veasy preached forenoon, Mr. Flynt afternoon.

"July 16. Mr. Loring preached all day in B., Mr. Fiske being sick.

"July 23. Mr. Ransom of Mendon preached all day.

"Nov. 10. I was at home all day, the meeting at my house, Mr. Fiske read a sermon of his own, 1 Cor. ii. 32.

"1704–5, Jan. In this month past we had two Church meetings in Braintree which occasioned much debate and some misapprehension, about Church discipline; by reason whereof we had much sinful discourse in this town; for, as the wise man saith, in the multitude of words there wants not sin: which words and debates caused such differences as that it was the beginning of the separation of the Town and Church, and the erecting a meeting house and forming a Congregation at Monatoquod. Nine of the church withdrew from the Lord's table, and in many things acted so disorderly, as that it occasioned a council of the elders and messengers of nine churches, who met in the old meeting house in Braintree, May 7, 1707. Mr. Nehemiah Hobart of Newtown was chosen moderator. The disorders among us call for tears and lamentations, rather than to be remembered.

"1705, March 16. Died, the Rev. Mr. Edward Thompson, Pastor of the Church of Christ in Marshfield; he died very suddenly, Æt. near 40 yrs.

"1706, May 2. A new house was raised in Braintree, for a meeting house. The matter hath been hitherto carried on in a way of great contention and disorder.

"1707, April 27. The Sabbath, at night a council chosen to hear our aggrieved brethren.

"May 7. We being involved in troubles, here in Braintree, called a council of nine churches, who assembled the 7th day here in B. What the issue was, we shall take notice of afterwards.

"1707, Sept. 10. Mr. Adams was ordained at the new church in the south part of Braintree.

"1708, July 25. The Sabbath, Mr. Fiske sick, Mr. Flynt preached all day.

"July 26. Opened Mr. Fiske's tomb.

"July 27. At Mr. Fiske's all day about the funeral of Mrs. Fiske.

"On the 24th of this month died, in Braintree, Mrs. Anna Fiske, the wife of Mr. Moses Fiske, in the 45th year of her age.

"1708, Aug. 10. Mr. Fiske died, Æt. 65 yrs.

"All the beginning of this month the Rev. Mr. Moses Fiske, Pastor of the Church of Christ in Braintree, lay sick of a sore malignant fever; and on the 10th day, being Tuesday, about one of the clock P. M. he died, willingly, patiently, blessed God, and forgave all his enemies. To say all that might be said of this holy man, far exceeds my poor ability. He was the youngest son of Mr. John Fiske, Pastor of the Church in Chelmsford. [Then follows his character which has been given in the second Discourse.] He was, with suitable solemnity and great lamentation, interred in Braintree, in his own tomb, the 12th day, where lie entombed with him the bodies of his two wives, Sarah, the daughter of Wm. Syms Esq., of Woborn. She died Dec. 2, 1692; by her he had 14 children, she died in the 40th year of her age.

"His 2d wife was Anna, the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Thos. Shepard of Charlestown; by her he had two children; she died, July 24, 1708. Æt. 45 yrs.

"1708, Sept. 15. A day of fasting in B. on account of Mr. Fiske's death. Mr. Danforth and Mr. Thacher carried on the day's work.

"Nov. 25. A Thanksgiving, we having no minister, I heard Mr. Adams the first time.

"Oct. 24. Sabbath, Mr. Bridge preached.

" " 31. " " Marsh "

"Nov. 15. A church meeting to call a minister.

"P. M. A meeting of the inhabitants.

"Nov. 23. A precinct meeting.

"Dec. 13. I warned a meeting to consult about receiving Mr. Marsh.

"Dec. 16. At Mr. Fisk's all day helping to prepare for Mr. Marsh; he came at night attended with the most of the inhabitants of this precinct.

"1708–9, Jan. 17. A general town meeting to vote what to give Mr. Marsh.

"Jan. 28. A precinct meeting voted to give Mr. M. £100. £70 pr. annum.

"Feb. 14. A precinct meeting about Mr. Marsh.

"March 14. A meeting of this precinct, Mr. Marsh gave an answer of his acceptance.

"1709, May 4. A fast in our church, in order to ordination.

"May 18. Mr. Marsh ordained.

"On the 18th day was ordained, here in Braintree, the Rev. Mr. Joseph Marsh, to the office of a Pastor over the church in the North Precinct, a person of singular accomplishments, both natural and acquired.

"July 3. The Sabbath, sacrament, the first time Mr. Marsh administered.

"July 31. The Sabbath, Mr. Flint preached from II. Matt. xxviii.

"Aug. 5. Ceiled Mr. Quinsey's pew.

"Oct. 2. The Sabbath, this day I heard a choice sermon on Ps. xix. and 12. 'Who can understand his errors;' which hath caused me to reflect on the past sinful errors of my life, all which I beg of God to forgive me. This day also Mr. Marsh preached on Isai. 55. and 7., wherein I was encouraged to return to the Lord, that I may obtain pardon and forgiveness.

"1709–10, Feb. 19. Sabbath, sacrament. The advice of the ministers read for reconciliation. The South Church's acknowledgment read and accepted.

"March 8. A fast on the account of the late disturbances in the town and Church. Mr. Danforth and Mr. Thacher of Milton preached.

"March 19. Sabbath, Mr. Adams preached in our meeting house.

"1710, April 30. The Sabbath, a gathering to print two sermons.

"Aug. 13. Mr. Mayhew preached from ii. Heb. 3.

"Aug. 20. Mr. John Fiske preached.

"Oct. 29. Sabbath, Mr. John Fiske preached.

"Mrs. Mary Baxter, wife of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Baxter, died, after a long and sore sickness, March 29, 1711. She was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Mr. Moses Fiske, died in the 38th year of her age.

"Mrs. Helen French, the mother of Wm. Veasie, and daughter of Rev. Mr. Wm. Tompson, deceased, died, Apr. 23. Æt. 85 yrs. 1711, an aged saint."

(Who is meant by the person last mentioned, I cannot satisfy myself.)

The most important ecclesiastical occurrence, during Mr. Fiske's ministry, was the division of the Town into separate Precincts; and this seems to have been the only occurrence that disturbed the tranquillity of his ministry. The first mention of the subject in the Town Records is as follows: *

"Nov. 25, 1706. Proposed, that, whereas there were two meeting houses erected in this Town, whether the South End shall be a congregation by themselves for the worship and service of God. It was then voted by the major part of said inhabitants on the affirmative."

And again:

"Nov. 3, 1708. The inhabitants of Braintree being met, &c. It was then voted, that there should be two distinct precincts or societies in this Town, for the more regular and convenient upholding of the worship of God."

The separation of the town into two precincts was agreed to and confirmed, by the General Court, Nov. 5, 1708. But before this result was reached, there had been much excitement and controversy. It appears from Fairfield's Diary, an extract from which has been given, that as early as in January, 1704–5, there had been "much debate and some misapprehensions about church discipline," and this he considers "the beginning of the separation of the town and church, and the erecting a meeting house and forming a congregation at Monatoquod." The writer of the Diary probably exaggerated the influence of this difference, in producing a division of the town. The heat that grew out of this difference very likely hastened the time of doing what, from necessity, must soon have been accomplished. The south part of the town had increased, and it must have been very inconvenient for those who resided there to come so far to meeting. At all events, the difficulties and dissensions were so great, that a council of elders and messengers was called, as the Diary states. The decision of this Council I have found in the archives of the State, together with the several petitions and counter petitions, from both parties, to the General Court. They are among the old documents which Mr. Felt has disposed

* Braintree Town Records, Book I.

and arranged so faithfully, and so conveniently for the purposes of reference. The papers are too long to be inserted here, nor is it important to do so, even if there were abundant space. The controversy affected Mr. Fiske's comfort, inasmuch as there was a legal question involved, namely, whether they of the south end of the town, who withdrew, were liable for their proportion of Mr. Fiske's salary, which had been voted at the regular town meeting. Fairfield gives May 2, 1706, as the date of "a new house being raised in Braintree for a meeting-house." This was more than two years before they were allowed, by the civil authority, to be a distinct precinct, and this circumstance would lead one to presume, that there was haste and irregularity in the matter, which they fully acknowledged afterward in an address to the General Court, a copy of which is before me.

In one of their petitions they state the reasons which moved them to take the step they did. They say: "The old meeting-house in the said town being built many years ago, when the town was small, was accommodated, for both situation and measure, to the circumstances of the town in that day, and is altogether inconvenient for the town, that is, the whole town, in its present circumstances, and as it is now situated, in two distinct parts, considerably distant one from the other, and not large enough to contain, with comfort, above two thirds of the inhabitants. The aforesaid inhabitants of the south end of the town, finding it very irksome, especially in the winter, to come so far as most of them come to meeting, and through such bad ways; whereby the Lord's day, which is a day of rest, was to them a day of labor rather; and knowing that the inhabitants of their part of the town, for numbers, did almost if not altogether equalize the other part, who did of themselves, when there were few if any inhabitants in the south part, maintain two worthy ministers at once to their satisfaction, have made their application to the town, at sundry times, for near a dozen years, at their general town meeting, that they would consent to have a larger meeting-house built for the whole, which might contain all the inhabitants, and might be something nearer to them, the other being now at one end of the town. But the other end of the town have wholly refused to gratify them in this their reasonable desire, and this notwithstanding there was a clear vote that there should be a new house built, so long ago as the year 1695, which now stands

upon record." The paper from which the extract above given has been made bears date, Nov. 25, 1706.

Having proceeded so far as to build a house for public worship, the next step taken by the inhabitants of the south part of the town was to gather a church, in a regular way, and to ordain a minister, which was done, Sept. 10, 1707. Mr. Hugh Adams was their first pastor. Having accomplished this much, they next petition the General Court, to determine the limits of the two precincts. They ask that their precint may be settled according to the "line of division already laid out and run between the two military companies in Braintree, there being in the north part of the town Col. Edmund Quincy's company, containing seventy-two families, and in the south part of the town Capt. John Mills's company, consisting of seventy-one families." It may excite a smile to be informed that this petition is dated: "From (Naphtali, if your Honors please so to name our neighborhood, from Gen. xxx. 8., Matt. iv. 15, 16, or) South Braintree, Oct. 28, 1707." However appropriate this name might have been at first; we cannot but rejoice that it does not remain, to remind posterity of the "great wrestlings" between the sister churches. The excitement that had grown out of this division of the town gradually subsided; a reconciliation was effected soon after the settlement of Mr. Marsh in the North Precinct; and the harmony of the two parts of the town was completed, by Mr. Adams's officiating in the north meeting-house, which he did, according to Fairfield's Diary, March 19, 1709–10.

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Mr. Joseph Marsh, the fourth minister of Braintree Church, was graduated at Harvard College in 1705. I have not been able to ascertain where he originated. The earliest notice I have discovered of him is the date of his admission to the Cambridge church. He was admitted, according to the records of that church, Nov. 28, 1703, and is mentioned as "Joseph Marsh, student." In one of the volumes of old papers and documents at the State

House in Boston, is an order passed by the General Court, 26 May, 1708, upon complaint being made that the town of Tivertown (then belonging to Massachusetts) did not comply with the law and provide themselves with a minister. This order directs "that Mr. Joseph Marsh, minister, be treated with and obtained, if it may be, and sent to the said town." There is also in the same volume, a petition from Mr. Marsh, dated Feb. 7, 1709, which states that he had preached in Tivertown ten Sabbaths, and having received a call to settle in Braintree, had obtained a substitute in the former place. Mr. Marsh was the first minister after the town was divided into two precincts. And the North Precinct Records contain the following vote.

"Feb. 14, 1708 – 9. Then voted by the freeholders and other inhabitants of the North End Precinct, regularly assembled, to raise the sum of £ 70 per annum, to be given to the Rev. Mr. Joseph Marsh, upon his settlement with us in the work of the ministry, during the time of his performance of that service, beginning the 1st day of March next.

"Then also it was voted to give to the said Mr. Joseph Marsh £ 100 upon his settlement with us, and that to be final for said settlement."

The following extract from the Braintree Town Records will show what was the condition of the town at that time.

"Aug. 31, 1708. The *real* estate of this town, being valued at the yearly income, amounted to the sum total of £ 691 6 *s.* The *personal;* oxen 219, cows 738, horses 190, sheep 1375, swine 78 in number. The polls 195 in number."

Mr. Marsh was ordained, May 18, 1709, and continued minister of the church till his death, which occurred, March 8, 1725 – 6, in the 41st year of his age, and the 17th of his ministry in Braintree. He lies buried, says Mr. Hancock, in the same tomb with Mr. Fiske. "The number of members added to the church under his ministry, including himself, is 102. Baptisms, 288. In the vacancy between his death and the settlement of his successor, there were 8 baptisms."

Mr. Marsh married Anne Fiske, daughter of his predecessor, as has already been stated in another note, 30 June, 1709. His children by her were Joseph, born 7 Dec. 1710; Hannah, born 10 Feb. 1715 – 16; Anne, born 15 April, 1722; Anne, born 23 Oct.

1724.* Besides these the Church Records contain, in his handwriting, the baptism of his daughter Mary, Feb. 2, 1718. Joseph kept for many years a private classical school in this town. Of Hannah nothing has been discovered. The first Anne probably died in infancy. Anne Marsh the second was married to Col. Josiah Quincy, by Mr. Wibird, July 11, 1762. Mary Marsh was married to Rev. Jedediah Adams of Stoughton, by Mr. Briant, May 19, 1746. The widow of Mr. Marsh survived him many years. In the will of his successor, Mr. Hancock, is a small legacy of £5 to "Mrs. Ann Marsh, relict of my Rev. Predecessor." I have met with no publication by Mr. Marsh. Under date of April 30, 1710, is the following entry in Fairfield's Diary. "The Sabbath. A gathering to print two sermons." From this one would be led to infer that two of Mr. Marsh's sermons were printed at that time.

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Mr. John Hancock, the fifth minister of the church, was son of the Rev. John Hancock, for a long time minister of that part of the town of Cambridge now called Lexington. His father seems to have been highly respected, and so great was his influence, that he went in the neighboring churches by the name of Bishop Hancock. In the Records of Cambridge First Church, it is entered: that John Hancock, Student, was admitted to full communion, Dec. 21, 1718. The subject of this note graduated at Harvard University in 1719. The following is taken from the Braintree North Precinct Records.

"June 29, 1726. At a meeting this day, an unanimous call was given to Mr. Hancock to settle in the work of the ministry. A yearly salary was at the same time voted of £110, in good and lawful bills of public credit on this Province, for his support. And a settlement of £200, in good and lawful bills of public credit, was also voted." Mr. Hancock's answer to the invitation to settle in Braintree is contained in the Precinct Records, dated from Cam-

* Braintree Register.

bridge. The account of his ordination that follows is extracted from the first book of our Church Records, and the original is in his own hand-writing.

"On Wednesday, Nov. 2, 1726. Mr. John Hancock was ordained the Pastor of the church of Christ in the North Precinct of Braintree, by the solemn imposition of the hands of the presbytery. The churches sent unto and desired to be present at the solemnity were the churches of Cambridge, Lexington, Dorchester 1st Church, Milton, Braintree South Church, Weymouth 1st Church, and Hingham 1st Church. The Rev. Mr. John Danforth made the first prayer. My honored father, the Rev. Mr. Hancock of Lexington, preached the sermon from 24 Luke, 49. The Rev. Mr. Thacher gave the charge; and the Rev. Mr. Danforth the right hand of fellowship. The Rev. Mr. Niles, and Mr. Appleton, laying on hands. His letter of dismission from the church of Cambridge was read at the same time by the Rev. Mr. Hancock. The auditory was very numerous."

Mr. Hancock continued in the ministry in this place until his death, which occurred, May 7, 1744, in the forty-second year of his age. He lies in the same tomb with Mr. Fiske and Mr. Marsh; but there is no inscription to his memory. This ought not so to be. Mr. Hancock married the widow of Mr. Samuel Thaxter of Hingham. Her maiden name was Mary Hawke. By her he had three children, whose baptisms are thus recorded by his own hand: "Mary Hancock, my first-born, April 13, 1735. John Hancock, my son, Jan. 16, 1736–7. Ebenezer Hancock, my son, Nov. 22, 1741." Mary was born 8 April, 1735. John, 12 Jan. 1736–7, and Ebenezer, Nov. 15, 1741.*

John Hancock, son of the minister of Braintree, was graduated at Harvard College, in 1754. His fortune, which he received from his uncle Thomas Hancock Esq., was ample, and the use he made of it liberal and patriotic. His manners were popular. He espoused with ardor the cause of his country, in the commencement of the revolutionary conflict. He was early made conspicuous by the denunciation levelled against him in connexion with his co-patriot, Samuel Adams. He was president of that Congress, which made the Declaration of Independence, and was the first to affix

* Braintree Church Records, Book 1.

his name to that memorable instrument. He was afterwards Governor of his native State for many years. The house in which he lived in Boston is now occupied by his nephew, and still stands, amidst surrounding improvements, an interesting and venerable relic of the past.

The name of Hancock is not only illustrious in the political annals of our country, but is honorably associated with the University. The Hon. Thomas Hancock of Boston, son of the Rev. John Hancock of Lexington, gave a legacy of £1000 sterling to the "President and Fellows of Harvard College, the whole income to be applied to the support and maintenance of some person, who shall be elected by the President and Fellows, with the approbation and consent of the overseers, to profess and teach the oriental languages, especially the Hebrew, in said College." Thus arose "the first Professorship founded in New England, or in America, by one of its sons." *

Mr. Hancock of Braintree, in his will, besides the legacy to the widow of his predecessor, which has been noticed in another place, left £10 to the First Church in Braintree; and to Harvard College, Sir Wm. Temple's works, 2 small folio vols.

The whole number of Baptisms during Mr. Hancock's ministry, was 355. Up to 1739, according to his own account, in one of his Century Sermons, there had been added to the church, including himself, 105.

Several individuals, of high and deserved celebrity, have been nurtured in the bosom of our church. John Hancock, as has been said, was baptized here by his father. John Adams, the second President of the United States, was son of a Deacon of the Church, was baptized by Mr. Hancock, Oct. 26, 1734–5, became, Jan. 3, 1773, a member of the Church, and was, to the close of his life, a devout and constant worshipper, in the place where his fathers had worshipped before him. The Quincys, from the earliest times, have lent their influence to support, and their virtues to adorn, the institutions of religion here, as well as the institutions of government and learning on a wider theatre. Judge Edmund Quincy, who died abroad in the service of his country, is affectionately mentioned in a sermon preached by Mr. Hancock, after the intel-

* See Peirce's History of Harvard College.

ligence was received of his death. John Quincy was for forty years representative of this town in the General Court, and for many years in succession Speaker of the House of Representatives. His name, which appears, in the Town and Precinct Records, in connexion with all public meetings, was given to this North Precinct of Braintree, when, in 1792, it was set off and incorporated as a distinct town. And that name is borne by an individual now living, who has ensured to it "a perpetual memory."

During Mr. Hancock's ministry a new meeting-house was erected by the Society. The circumstance is thus related by himself in the Records of the Church:

"Braintree, July 27, 1731.

"This day the First Parish in this town began to raise and rebuild an house for the public worship of God. And through the divine goodness, the house was finished and dedicated, Oct. 8th, 1732, in peaceable times. The text preached upon at the dedication, was, Is. lx. 13. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was then administered. Upon this Sabbath also we began to read the Holy Scriptures in public. The portion then read was 1 Kings 8 ch. The Sabbath following we began the book of Job and the Gospel of St. Matthew.

"Deo Optimo, maximo, laus et gloria. Madam Norton then presented to the Church a very handsome velvet cushion for the pulpit."

The completion of the first century from the gathering of the Church occurred also during Mr. Hancock's ministry, and furnished an interesting occasion which he noticed appropriately. In the Church Records is the following in his hand-writing.

"The first Church of Christ in Braintree was embodied, Sept. 17th, 1639. *

"N. B. On Sept. 16, 1739, being Lord's day, the first Church in Braintree, both males and females, solemnly renewed the covenant of their fathers, immediately before the participation of the Lord's Supper. The text preached upon at the solemnity was lxiii. Is. 7."

The two Discourses, delivered on that interesting occasion, were,

* This date is altered in the Records, perhaps by Mr. Hancock himself, to 16th. The testimony of Winthrop, however, who was living and probably present at the transaction, fixes the date to the 17th beyond question.

by request of his parishoners, published the same year, with notes which furnish valuable information respecting the history of the church to which he ministered so faithfully. A second edition of these Discourses, with short additional notes, was published at the suggestion of the elder President Adams, in 1811. Besides these well knowir Century Discourses, Mr. Hancock, in the year 1738, on the 23d of April, preached a funeral Sermon, which was subsequently printed, on the "death of the Hon. Edmund Quincy Esq., one of his Majesty's Council, and of the Judges of the Circuit, and agent for the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, at the Court of Great Britain, who died, of the small pox in London, the 23d of Feb., 1737–8, in the 57th year of his age." The following sentence, taken from this Sermon, is happily expressed: "The late honorable Edmund Quincy was a gentleman of bright intellectual accomplishments, vailed from his youth up under a great deal of modesty, yet manifest to such as have the discerning of spirits." "My own loss," he says in another part of the Sermon, "in the death of your honored father is none of the least. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company. Alas my father! my father! my father!

"In his affectionate and acceptable letter to me, dated London Jan. 31, 1737, in the concluding part of it are these words, namely, 'My respects to my friends of the church and town, in whose good wishes I doubt not but I have an interest.'

"And in token of his peculiar affection to this church, whereof he was a leading member for many years, he has left us an acceptable legacy in his last will and testament.* He loved us, and how was his heart engaged in building us a synagogue?"

Mr. Hancock's other publications, so far as I have been able to discover, were:

1. "A Discourse upon the good work, delivered at the Monthly Tuesday Lecture in Pembrook, Sept. 7, 1742."

2. "The danger of an unqualified ministry, represented in a Sermon preached at the ordination of the Rev. Mr. John Bass, to the Pastoral care of the Church of Christ in Ashford, in the Colony of Connecticut, Sept. 7, 1743."

* See Note P. in Appendix.

P. Page 49.

It is the object of this note to give some account of the several houses for public worship that have, from time time, been erected by the First Congregational Society in this place. Mr. Hancock, in one of his Century Discourses, makes the following remark: "This is the third house, in which we are now worshipping, that we and our fathers have built for the public worship of God." As it seems to me altogether improbable, that Mr. Hancock should have included any other house besides those which had been erected for the use of his own Society, I understand his remark literally. There have, therefore, been four meeting-houses erected for the use of the First Congregational Society. The old stone meeting-house, which stood near the site now occupied by the Second Congregational Church, instead of being the first, as it has been frequently called, was, if I am right, the second house. My reasons for this supposition, besides the construction put upon Mr. Hancock's language, are these. First, — it is improbable, and not according to the course taken in other towns in the Colony, that a structure, capable of standing nearly a century, as that house did, should have been erected by the first settlers in this place. The first meeting-house in Boston * was erected in 1632. "Its roof was thatched, and its walls were of mud." That frail and humble structure, corresponding so well with the condition of the settlers in so early a period, did not stand long, for we learn from Winthrop,† that in 1639 the old meeting-house was sold, "being decayed and too small," and in 1640, that is, only eight years after the first was erected, they built a new house. The case was the same in Hingham, and we may conclude that all the little plantations would be led from necessity to adopt a similar course.

Second. It is rather remarkable that no mention is made, in the Braintree Town Records, of the building of the old stone meeting-house, and I have been disappointed in finding no certain evidence of the date of its erection. But the vane which belonged to that meeting-house has been preserved, and a wood cut, representing it faithfully, is given in another part of this pamphlet. It will be seen that it bears date 1666. This may have been merely the time when

* Emerson's History of First Church Boston

† Winthrop's N. England, Savage's Edition.

the *vane* was put up; but the more probable inference seems to be, that this was the year when the house itself was erected. However we may decide upon this point, it is clear, I think, that the old stone meeting-house, humble as it was in its appearance and accommodations, was preceded by another yet more humble. Where that first house stood cannot be determined perhaps; probably, however, on the same spot where the stone meeting-house stood. For in the old Braintree Records, in mentioning the laying out of the "Country High-way," from Weymouth to Dorchester, which was done 25th 12 mo., 1640, Braintree meeting-house is spoken of, and the road, when it reached Braintree meeting-house, was laid out on both sides of it, leaving the meeting-house in the middle of the road. The old stone meeting-house was without pews, except such as were, in the course of time, built, for their own convenience, by individuals. Votes, similar to the following, occur frequently in the Town Records. "Jany. 6, 1700–1. Then voted that the Rev. Mr. Moses Fiske should have liberty to build a pew by the S. E. window in the meeting-house, he leaving convenient passage." The house was furnished with seats, and the men were separated from the women; and the business of "seating the house," as it was called, that is, of assigning to the worshippers the seats they were to occupy, was attended with great difficulty, and was the occasion of complaint on the part of those who thought too low a seat in the synagogue had been assigned to them.

A description of some of the practices of our fathers, by a writer who visited New England soon after its settlement, may be found interesting, and may be pertinent in this connexion. He thus speaks of their mode of worship.

"The public worship is in as fair a meeting-house as they can provide, wherein, in most places, they have been at great charges. Every Sabbath or Lord's day, they come together, at Boston by ringing of a bell, about nine of the clock or before. The Pastor begins with solemn prayer continuing about a quarter of an hour. The Teacher then readeth and expoundeth a chapter; then a Psalm is sung, whichever one of the Ruling Elders dictates. After that the Pastor preacheth a Sermon, and sometimes extempore exhorts. Then the Teacher concludes with prayer and a blessing.

"About two in the afternoon, they repair to the meeting-house again; and then the Pastor begins, as before noon, and a Psalm

being sung, the teacher makes a Sermon. He was wont, when I came first, to read and expound a chapter, also before his sermon in the afternoon. After and before his Sermon, he prayeth.

"After that ensues Baptism if there be any, which is done, by either Pastor or Teacher, in the Deacon's seat, the most eminent place in the church, next under the Elder's seat.

"Which ended, follows the contribution, one of the Deacons saying, 'Brethren of the Congregation, now there is time left for contribution, wherefore as God hath prospered you, so freely offer.' — The Magistrates and chief Gentlemen first, and then the Elders, and all the congregation of men, and most of them that are not of the church, all single persons, widows, and women in absence of their husbands, come up one after another one way, and bring their offerings to the Deacon at his seat, and put it into a box of wood for the purpose, if it be money or papers; if it be any other chattel, they set it or lay it down before the Deacons, and so pass another way to their seats again. This contribution is of money, or papers, promising so much money. I have seen a fair gilt cup with a cover, offered there by one, which is still used at the communion. Which moneys and goods the Deacons dispose towards the maintenance of the ministers, and the poor of the Church, and the Church's occasions, without making account ordinarily.*

"Marriages are solemnized and done by the Magistrates, and not by the Ministers. At burials, nothing is read, nor any funeral Sermon made, but all the neighborhood, or a good company of them, come together by tolling of the bell, and carry the dead solemnly to his grave, and there stand by him while he is buried. The ministers are most commonly present." †

When to the account, given above, we add that a drum was, in the earliest times, used as a substitute for a bell, to call the people together, and an hour glass stood before the preacher, instead of a clock, to warn him when to leave off "handling his subject," we may form some idea of the customs that prevailed in the days of our fathers. The two following votes also, selected from the Braintree North Precinct Records, prove that we have escaped some annoyances to which our pious fathers were exposed. "March 17, 1728–9. The Precinct then having debated upon the disturbance made by dogs in the meeting-house on Sabbath days, to prevent the

* Lechford's Plain Dealing, pp. 76, 77, 78. † Ibid. p. 94.

same, They then voted, that Joseph Parmenter should have twenty shillings, provided he would take care and pains in that matter, by beating and keeping of them out.

"March 30, 1730. It was voted that Joseph Parmenter should have twenty shillings for his service as Precinct clerk, and clearing the meeting-house of snow, the year past, there having been cart loads of snow blown in."

As early as 1695, in November, a vote was passed at a regular town meeting, that a new meeting-house should be built. The house contemplated by this vote would have been for the whole town. This is the vote to which the inhabitants of the south part of the town refer, in their memorial to the General Court, setting forth their reasons for withdrawing themselves from the north part of the town, and building a house for their own separate accommodation. The vote passed in 1695 was not carried into effect, but the old house was repaired, and was occupied for worship, until a new one was at length built, in Mr. Hancock's day, for the accommodation of what had become the North Precinct of Braintree. The extracts that follow, from the Precinct Records, show that there were several places thought of where the house should be built.

"Dec. 22, 1729. After some considerable debate upon the question, whether the Precinct did judge it needful to have a new meeting house, they then voted in the affirmative.

"Jan. 5, 1729–30. Then, after a considerable debate of the Precinct about a place where to set the said meeting-house, a vote was asked whether it should be set at Col. Quincy's gate; it passed in the negative.

"Then whether where the old meeting-house stands or near unto it; it passed in the negative.

"After more debate upon a place where the said meeting-house should be set, the moderator was desired to ask a vote, whether the Precinct would set it at the ten miles stone, or near unto it; it passed in the affirmative.

"Jany. 13, 1730–31. The question where the meeting-house should be placed was again discussed at the meeting. The question was put whether the said house should be erected on the training field, within the said Precinct, as near to the west corner of the land of Ensign Saml. Baxter, as the land would admit of; it passed in the affirmative."

The old stone meeting-house was allowed to stand, until, Feb. 18, 1747–8, a vote passed to sell it to the highest bidder. It was sold to Serg. Moses Belcher and Mr. Joseph Nightingale for £100 old tenor. The wooden meeting-house which was dedicated in 1732, and which stood during the larger portion of Mr. Hancock's ministry, the whole of Mr. Briant's, the whole of Mr. Wibird's, and the larger portion of Mr. Whitney's, was repaired at different times, particularly in 1806, when it was considerably enlarged, to meet the wants of the Parish.

On the 11th day of April, 1826, a committee was appointed by the Parish, to whom was referred the subject of erecting a new meeting-house of stone. This committee reported, 6th of Nov. 1826, infavor of such a house, and their Report was, at the same time, almost unanimously accepted. A building committee was chosen, and on the 9th of the ensuing April, 1827, ground was broken for the cellar of the new Church. On the 11th of June, 1827, the corner stone was laid with appropriate solemnities. A prayer was offered, and an address was made by the Pastor, Rev. Mr. Whitney.* Hon. Thomas Greenleaf, Chairman of the Building Committee, made some interesting remarks, and read the inscription on the plate, which was deposited in a lead box, together with the several deeds of land presented to the town by the late President Adams. The inscription is as follows:

"A temple for the public worship of God; and for public instruction in the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion. Erected by the Congregational Society in the Town of Quincy; the stone taken from the granite quarries, given to the town by the Hon. John Adams, late President of the United States.

This stone was laid June 11th, 1827, in the fifty-first year of American Independence.

The Rev. Peter Whitney, Pastor of the Society.

John Quincy Adams, President of the United States.

Levi Lincoln, Governor and Commander in Chief of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

John Whitney, Danl. Spear, John Souther,
Selectmen of the Town of Quincy.

Building Committee. — Thos. Greenleaf, Chairman, Noah Curtis, John Souther, Lemuel Brackett, Daniel Spear.

* See Whitney's History of Quincy.

Alexander Parris, Architect.
William Wood, Master Builder.

MEMORANDA.

The population of the town estimated at 2000. That of the United States at 13,000,000.

Engraved by Hazen Morse."

Worship was held in the old house, for the last time, on Sunday 12th October, 1828. In the afternoon a farewell sermon, from the words, 'Your fathers, where are they; andthe Prophets, do they live forever?' was preached, and the occasion is described as very interesting and affecting.* The following notice of the Dedication of the new Church is taken from the Church Records. "The stone Congregational Church in Quincy was dedicated to the worship and service of the one only living and true God, on Wednesday, the 12th of Nov. 1828. Rev. Dr. Gray offered the Introductory Prayer. Rev. Mr. Brooks read selections from Scripture. Rev. Dr. Lowell offered the Dedicatory Prayer. The Pastor of the Church, Rev. Mr. Whitney, preached from Gen. Ch. 28. 17v. Rev. Dr. Porter offered the concluding prayer."

The following beautiful Hymn, from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Pierpont, was sung on the occasion, and will be thought worth preserving.

"When thy Son, O God, was sleeping
In death's rocky prison bound,
When his faithful ones were weeping,
And the guards were watching round;
Then thy word that strong house shaking,
Rent the rocky bars away,
And the holy sleeper waking
Rose to meet the rising day.

Where thy word, by Jesus spoken,
In its power is heard e'en now,
Shake the hills, the rocks are broken,
As on Calvary's trembling brow;
From the bosom of the mountain,
At that word, these stones have burst,
And have gathered round the fountain,
Where our souls may quench their thirst.

* Journal of F. A. Whitney.

Here the water of salvation
Long hath gushed a liberal wave;
Here, a Father of our nation
Drank, and felt the strength it gave.
Here he sleeps, — his bed how lowly!
But his aim and trust were high;
And his memory, that is holy,
And his name, it cannot die.

While beneath this Temple's Portal
Rest the relics of the just,
While the light of hope immortal
Shines above his sacred dust,
While the well of life its waters
To the weary here shall give,
Father, may thy sons and daughters,
Kneeling round it, drink and live."

The church is built of granite, with a pediment in front, supported by four Doric pillars, the shaft of each being a single block. It contains 134 pews on the lower floor, and 22 in the galleries. According to the very full and clear report of the Building Committee, contained in the Parish Records, the work included in the original estimate, made by the architect, was performed at a cost $3000 within that estimate. The total cost of the building, with the improvements around it, was $30,488,56, to which must be added the sum of $4350 voted to be paid to the proprietors of pews in the old meeting-house, and the cost of the furnace. The debt incurred by the erection of so costly an edifice was, finally, in the year 1833, wiped off.

Under the portico of this church lie, in a granite tomb, the remains of President John Adams and Abigail his wife. And in this connexion I cannot forbear giving the following letter, a copy of which is inserted in the Parish Records.

"Quincy, 8 Sept. 1826.

"To Thos. Greenleaf, Josiah Quincy, Thos. B. Adams, Edward Miller, and Geo. W. Beale, Supervisors of the Temple and School Fund, given by John Adams, late deceased, to the Town of Quincy.

"Gentlemen: — Upon the decease of my late honored father, I have considered it a duty devolving upon me, to erect a plain and modest monument to his memory; and my wish is that, divested of

all ostentation, it may yet be as durable as the walls of the Temple, to the erection of which he has contributed, and as the rocks of his native town, which are to supply the materials for it.

"This purpose may be most advantageously effected, if the inhabitants of the town, in their corporate capacity, should accede to the proposition which I now make to them through you, and upon which I request you to take their sense as speedily as may be convenient.

"I propose that when the Congregational Society in this town shall determine to commence the erection of the Temple, they should adopt a resolution authorizing you to conclude with me an agreement, whereby at my expense, a vault or tomb may be constructed, under the Temple, wherein may be deposited the mortal remains of the late John Adams and of Abigail, his beloved and only wife. And that within the walls of the Temple, at a suitable place to be approved by me, a tablet or tablets, of marble or other stone, may be adapted to the side of the walls, with a view to durability, and with such obituary inscription or inscriptions as I shall deem proper.

"The assent of the town to this modification in the construction of the Temple, I suppose to be necessary, or at least expedient. But the time when the Temple itself shall be built must, I conceive, depend upon the Congregational Society and Church under the Pastoral care of the Rev. Peter Whitney.

"In proceeding to carry into effect the objects of the Donations to the town, I believe great attention will be due to keeping these distinctions in mind. The town and the parish (by which I mean the Congregational Society and Church) are distinct corporations, and consist of persons partly the same, and partly different. The Temple, when erected, will, doubtless, be the property of the parish, subject to that of the individual pew holders; but the Donations being to the town, their assent seems to be necessary even to fix the time for the erection of the edifice.

"I have many reasons for desiring that this may be undertaken without delay; and among the rest, that both my parents may not remain, for an indefinite time, without a stone to tell where they lie. Should the town and the parish both assent to my present proposal, I shall be anxious to know when the latter would propose to commence the building. Should they approve my design, I shall take

no measures for erecting a monument elsewhere; which I propose to do, should they see any inconvenience in the acceptance of my offer. It will be necessary that the agreement should be in writing; perhaps by indenture, to fix the property of the vault or tomb, and of the tablets.

"I am, very respectfully, your friend,

"(Signed) JOHN QUINCY ADAMS."

According to Mr. Adams's request, expressed in the above letter, an indenture was made, a copy of which is contained in the Parish Records, by which was conveyed to John Quincy Adams a "portion of the soil in the cellar, situated under the porch at the entrance of the said Temple, and partitioned off by walls, being the central division of the said cellar under the porch, and containing fourteen feet in length and fourteen in breadth." By the same indenture liberty was also granted to affix to any part of the walls of the Temple tablets with obituary inscriptions. Accordingly, on the east end of the edifice, at the side of the pulpit, a mural monument was erected, surmounted by a bust of John Adams from the chisel of Greenough. On the tablets beneath the bust are the following inscriptions.

Libertatem, Amicitiam, Fidem Retinebis.

D. O. M.

Beneath these walls
Are deposited the mortal remains of
JOHN ADAMS,
Son of John and Susanna (Boylston) Adams;
Second President of the United States;
Born $\frac{19}{30}$ October, 1735;
On the Fourth of July, 1776,
He pledged his Life, Fortune, and Sacred Honor
To the Independence of his Country;
On the third of September, 1783,
He affixed his seal to the definitive Treaty with
Great Britain,
Which acknowledged that Independence,
And consummated the redemption of his pledge;
On the Fourth of July, 1826,
He was summoned
To the Independence of Immortality,
And to the Judgment of his God.
This house will bear witness to his piety;
This Town, his birth-place, to his munificence;
History to his Patriotism;
Posterity to the depth and compass of his mind.

At his side
Sleeps till the Trump shall sound
ABIGAIL,
His beloved and only wife,
Daughter of Wm. and Elizabeth (Quincy) Smith;
In every relation of life a pattern,
Of Filial, Conjugal, Maternal, and Social virtue;
Born Nov. $\frac{11}{22}$ 1744,
Deceased 28 Oct. 1818,
Æt. 74.

Married 25 Oct. 1764.
During an union of more than half a century
They survived, in harmony of sentiment, principle, and affection,
The tempests of civil commotion;
Meeting undaunted, and surmounting
The terrors and trials of that Revolution
Which secured the Freedom of their Country;
Improved the condition of their times;
And brightened the prospects of Futurity
To the race of man upon Earth.

PILGRIM,

From lives thus spent thy earthly duties learn,
From Fancy's dreams to active Virtue turn;
Let Freedom, Friendship, Faith, thy soul engage,
And serve like them thy Country and thy age.

At a Parish Meeting held Feb. 16, 1837, permission was granted, by an unanimous vote, to individuals, to place an organ in the meeting-house, for the use of the Society.

The Organ, which was procured, had previously belonged to Trinity Church in Boston, and was disposed of when the worshippers in that Church furnished themselves with a more powerful instrument.

The following is a list of the sacred vessels belonging to the Church, with the inscriptions they bear, namely:

A small cup, having two handles, and marked on the bottom "Joanna Yorke 1685 B. C."

A small cup, of the same form as the preceding, bearing a coat of arms on the surface, and marked on the bottom, "B. C. 1699."

A small cup, of the same form as the preceding, plain on the surface, with the following inscription: "The gift of Deacon Samuel Bass, Wm. Veazey, Jno. Ruggle, David Walesby, 1694."

A high cup marked below the rim: "The gift of William Needham to Brantry Church 1688."

A high cup without mark or date, but apparently very old.

A high cup marked: "The gift of Mrs. Mehetable Fisher to the First Church of Christ in Braintree 1741."

A cup marked: "The gift of the Hon$^{ble.}$ Edmund Quincy Esq. to the First Church in Braintree, Feby. 23d, 1737–8."

A tankard marked: "The gift of the Honbl. John Quincy Esq. to the First Church of Christ in Braintree, 1767."

A tankard marked: "The Gift of Mrs. Sarah Adams (Relict of Mr. Edward Adams late of Milton) to the First Church in Braintree." There is no date added, but the Church Records fix the time Nov. 4, 1770.

"Four large-sized Flagons, marked as follows: "Presented by Daniel Greenleaf to the Congregational Church in Quincy 1828."

Three Plates marked thus: "Presented to the First Congregational Church in Quincy, by Deacon Josiah Adams, Deacon Daniel Spear, and Deacon Samuel Savil, 1828."

A Baptismal Vase having this inscription : "Presented to the Congregational Church in the town of Quincy, by Mrs. Eliza Susan Quincy, 1828."

The two volumes of Scriptures, used in the pulpit, contain the following:

"To the Church and Congregational Society of the Town of Quincy, this Bible, for the use of the Sacred Desk, is respectfully presented by Josiah Quincy.

"Boston, Oct. 1808."

"New bound and divided into two volumes, Oct. 1828."

Q. Page 50.

Lemuel Briant, the sixth minister of the Braintree First Church, was born about the year 1722. He was a native of Scituate, Mass., where his ancestors had resided from a very early period. His father, Thomas Briant, Esq., says Mr. Dean, "was an able and useful man as a magistrate; but tradition speaks of some singularities. He was the father of Lemuel Briant, a man of extraordinary powers and singularities, who died 1754, and was buried at Scituate." He was graduated at Harvard College in 1739. Where he pursued his theological studies I have not learned; perhaps in his native town, for he was admitted to full communion with the church in Scituate, July 5, 1741. Before coming to Braintree it appears that he preached some time in Worcester.

At a precinct meeting held in the North Precinct of Braintree, Sept. 16, 1745, Mr. Briant was elected, by an unanimous vote, minister of the church. And on the 23d day of September, same year, "the Precinct voted that there shall be allowed and paid unto the Rev. Mr. Lemuel Briant (if he settles with them in the work of the ministry) one hundred pounds in bills of credit on this province of the last emission; fifty pounds to be paid at the end of the first year after his ordination; the other fifty pounds to be paid at the end of the second year, as an encouragement towards his settling with them in the aforesaid work.

And they then voted, "that there shall be allowed and paid unto him, the said Mr. Lemuel Briant, fifty pounds per year in bills of credit on this province of the last emission, for two years after his first settling with them; and at the end of two years there shall be an addition made of twelve pounds and ten shillings in bills of the like emission, or in other bills equivalent, as a yearly salary during his performing the work of the ministry among them."

It appears, by an entry in the Church Records, that at a meeting of the First Church in Braintree, held Sept. 15, 1745, it was voted, "That the church will forego the privilege of preceding the other qualified inhabitants in the choice of their minister; and will join with the other inhabitants of the said Precinct, pursuant to a warrant made out for assembling them on the 16th instant, in order to the choice of a gospel minister to settle among them."

The following account of his ordination, in Mr. Briant's handwriting, is taken from the Church Records. "Wednesday, Dec. 11th, 1745, Lemuel Briant was ordained the Pastor of the 1st Church of Christ in Braintree. The churches sent to were, The Church at Lexington. The 2d Church in Scituate. The 2d in Braintree. The 1st in Hingham. The first in Scituate. The Church in Milton. The 1st in Stoughton. The Church in Dorchester. The 1st in Weymouth. The Rev. Mr. Bourne of Scituate began with prayer. The Rev. Mr. Eells of Scituate preached from 2 Cor. iv. 5. The Rev. Mr. Niles of Braintree gave the charge. The Rev. Mr. Taylor of Milton the right hand of fellowship."

It has been said that Mr. Briant was not examined, at his ordination, as to his Creed.*

Mr. Briant's ministry in Braintree was comparatively brief, and his peace was disturbed by a religious controversy which, as we shall presently see, was occasioned by one of his publications, and which raged for several years. Indeed his life was a short one. Oct. 22, 1753, a precinct meeting was called, one object of which was; "To take into serious consideration the matter of the Rev. Mr. Briant's petition, bearing date Oct. 10, 1753, inscribed to the North Parish in Braintree; more especially that clause in the peti-

* Bradford's Biography of Dr. Mayhew. This fact is stated in the Report, made by a committee of his society, which will be noticed in the proper place.

tion which earnestly desires that you will make way for the settling a minister, by dismissing your present Pastor from the burdens and labors of his office ; and if the parish, after mature consideration had on the premises, shall think it advisable and that it will be for the best, (all things considered,) both for the parish and for our Rev. Pastor, to grant him a dismission ; or if otherwise the Parish shall think best to wait patiently some time longer, to see if it may not please God in his good Providence to restore our Rev. Pastor to his former state of health."

At the meeting, John Quincy, Esq. was chosen Moderator. "Then the vote was put whether they would proceed according to the warrant; it passed in the affirmative. Then the vote was put whether they would grant to the Rev. Mr. Briant his request in respect to his dismission, and it passed in the affirmative. A committee was chosen, Edmund Quincy, Esq., Major Joseph Crosby, Deacon Parmenter, Mr Josiah Quincy, and Deacon Moses Belcher, to acquaint the Rev. Mr. Briant with the proceedings of the meeting, viz. that they have dismissed him from his ministerial office in this place; and to return him thanks for his labors in the ministry among us." *

Mr. Briant did not long survive his removal from this place. He died the following year, at Hingham, according to the author of the Description of Scituate in the Massachusetts Historical Collections.† His will, however, I have found, in the Suffolk Probate Records. It is dated 21st of August, 1754, and in it he styles himself Lemuel Briant, Gent. of Boston. The will was examined and proved Oct. 8, 1754. Mr. Briant was buried at Scituate, his native place, and the Rev. Mr. May of that town has been kind enough to procure for me the following inscription from his grave stone. "Here lies interred, the body of the Rev. Mr. Lemuel Bryant, who departed this life, October the First, 1754. Aged 32 years."

In the interval between Mr. Hancock's death and Mr. Briant's settlement there were 31 baptisms. During Mr. Briant's ministry, there were 155 baptisms and 60 admitted to the church.

Mr. Briant had two sons; Lemuel, born July 16, 1749, and Joseph, born Nov. 23, 1751.

From Mr. Briant's publications one would be justified in pro-

* North Prec. Records. † Hist. Coll. 2d series, Vol. IV.

nouncing him a man of strong native abilities, of a capacious and vigorous intellect. He was a bold thinker, and fearless and independent in his judgment. His wit was pungent; he had considerable command of language and skill in the management of an argument; and he was capable of giving forcible, pointed, and felicitous expression to his thoughts. In theological speculations he had advanced considerably beyond the prevalent opinions of his day, and was one among that small but honored company of New England divines, who had been able to extricate their minds from the dogmas of Calvin, and to discover and appreciate the native worth of simple, primitive Christianity. And here seems to be a suitable place to quote from the letter of President John Adams to Dr. Morse, which has been so frequently published. The letter is dated, Quincy, May 15, 1815.

"Dear Doctor,

"I thank you for your favor of the 10th, and the pamphlet enclosed, entitled, 'American Unitarianism.' I have turned over its leaves, and found nothing that was not familiarly known to me. In the preface, Unitarianism is represented as only thirty years old in New England. I can testify as a witness to its old age. Sixty-five years ago, my own minister, the Rev. Lemuel Bryant; Dr. Jonathan Mayhew of the West Church in Boston; the Rev. Mr. Shute, of Hingham; the Rev John Brown, of Cohasset; and perhaps equal to all, if not above all, the Rev. Mr. Gay, of Hingham, were Unitarians. Among the laity how many could I name, lawyers, physicians, tradesmen, farmers! But at present I will name only one, Richard Cranch, a man who had studied divinity, and Jewish and Christian antiquities, more than any clergyman now existing in New England."

Some account of the controversy, in which Mr Briant was engaged with neighboring ministers, may be expected in this note.

In the year 1749, as I have already stated, Mr. Briant published his sermon on moral virtue. This sermon had probably been preached in various places in the course of the author's exchanges. We know that it was preached in Scituate, the native place of the writer. Mr. Dean, in his History of that town, gives the following anecdote.

"Mr. Lemuel Bryant of Quincy, (Braintree,) who had gone

somewhat before the age in liberal speculations, preached for him (Mr. Eels of Scituate) on a certain day, and delivered a sermon, which he afterwards printed, on the text, 'All our righteousnesses are filthy rags,' and explained the text in the manner which would now be generally acceptable, showing that the formalities of a corrupt generation of the Jews were therein described, and not the moral virtues of true worshippers, which led Mr. Eells to say, 'Alas! Sir, you have undone to-day, all that I have been doing for forty years,' and Bryant, with his accustomed wit and courtesy, replied, 'Sir, you do me too much honor in saying, that I could undo, in one sermon, the labors of your long and useful life.' An aged and highly intelligent gentleman, who related this anecdote to us twenty years since, also remarked, that Mr. Eells preached a series of sermons afterward, with a view to correct Mr. Bryant's errors, but it was not easy, remarked the same gentleman, to discern much difference between his doctrine and that of Mr Bryant." *

Under the first head of his discourse our author accumulates circumstances to show the great degeneracy into which the Jewish people had sunk; and to prove that "the drift and design of the Prophet's discourse is not to depreciate true righteousness; — but to convince them that they were utterly destitute of it," &c. He finishes his picture of the corruption of the Prophet's time in the following striking manner: "I will only add, that all their crying abominations were committed among them under the greatest aggravations, while they enjoyed superior advantages of excelling in virtue; while they had the constant instructions and warnings of God's Prophets to the contrary; while God, by a variety of signal providences both merciful and afflictive, endeavored to engage them in their duty and obedience; finally, while they themselves pretended to be the most precise people under heaven; so that in fact they made their religion a cloak for their immoralities, and imagined all was well, that they were very pious good people, though they lied, stole, committed adultery, swore falsely, and in short, in common life practised all manner of villainy, so long as they could say, (which was the common cant of the times,) *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we.*"

Under the second head of discourse Mr. Briant endeavors to

* Dean's History of Scituate, p. 199.

prove that the text was not "designed to be a just character of the personal righteousness of truly good and holy men."

This our author argues from "the nature, use, and importance of true righteousness, considered as the image of God, the substance of Christianity, the product of the spirit, the ornament of great price in the sight of God, of particular and universal influence on human happiness, in their present, and in their future eternal state," and draws the inference that the Scriptures never could have designed to undervalue this righteousness.

Under the third head of discourse Mr. B. points out "some of the dangerous consequences of admitting this sense of the text;" thatall such attempts to depreciate moral virtue will "minister to the growth of infidelity, and of vice among professed Christians, and to the great disquiet of sincere, good Christians, who are the proper heirs of comfort." All these points he illustrates in his peculiarly bold and impressive style. With respect to the influence of such a doctrine in favoring infidelity, I cannot avoid quoting a portion of his remarks.

"But if this be *Revelation* and *Grace*, to vilify human nature, and disparage all our improvements in those divine virtues wherein essentially consists all our glory and felicity; if the Scriptures are used to affront human reason, and debauch men's manners, and the most glorious dispensation of the Gospel in particular, instead of teaching us to deny ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, charitably, and devoutly in this present world, be conceived of only as a scheme calculated to allow men the practice of their vices here, with impunity hereafter; if this be the liberty and peculiar privilege of the saints to be discharged from their obligations to obey their master, and they that break his commandments stand fairer for his *grace*, than they who conscientiously keep them, for fear they should trust to what they do; so far, I say, as any take their conceptions from such corruptions of Christianity, they must necessarily be prejudiced against it. Thunder we ever so loud, without any previous *lightning*, 'He that believeth not shall be damned,' it will signify nothing, for they will be *damned* before they will believe."

Such is an imperfect analysis of this remarkable Sermon: — remarkable it deserves to be called on several accounts; for its intrinsic excellences, for the clear thinking, the freedom from mistiness, preju-

dice, and cant, the perfect independence of mind, the strength and pungency of style, which it displays. But it was not suited to find much popular favor at that day, and must wait many years before the sentiments it advocated should be in harmony with the public mind. The distinctness with which it stated the opinions of its author, and exposed the absurdities into which the popular creed had run, startled those who had quietly settled themselves with the conviction that Calvinism was something very good, without ever having examined thoroughly what it was, or what it led to.

Mr. Briant was replied to by several ministers. The Rev. Samuel Niles, at that time Pastor of the Second Church in Braintree, published a Sermon entitled; "A Vindication of divers important Gospel Doctrines, and of the Teachers and Professors of them against the injurious reflections and misrepresentations contained in a late printed Discourse of the Rev. Mr. Lemuel Briant's, Entitled, &c., by Samuel Niles, Pastor of a Church in Braintree."

The copy I have seen is without date,* but was probably delivered and printed soon after Mr. Briant's Sermon appeared. But Mr. Briant's chief opponent was Mr. Porter, who was a minister in Bridgewater. "He died," says Allen in his Biographical Dictionary, "in the hope of the Christian, March 12, 1802, in the 87th year of his age, and the 62d of his ministry, having been enabled to preach till near the close of his life. He was a man of respectable talents, of great prudence, and of a blameless life." — In 1750 he published a Sermon entitled, "The absurdity and blasphemy of substituting the personal righteousness of men in the room of the surety-righteousness of Christ, in the important article of Justification before God. A Sermon preached at the South Precinct in Braintree, Dec. 25, 1749. By John Porter A. M., Pastor of the 4th Church of Christ in Bridgewater." — He took for his text the same passage of Scripture that Mr. Briant had discoursed from, and doubtless intended a refutation of the doctrine of the Pastor of the First Church in this town. This Sermon is the production of a mind strongly and apparently with sincerity attached to the system of Calvin, but narrow in the compass of its thoughts, and far inferior to the mind of his opponent. Mr. Porter undertakes to interpret the text as meant by the Prophet to be applied to the right-

* Allen's Biography says it was published in 1752.

eousness of the very best men, and consequently including the Prophet himself and his own character. He adduces three arguments for this interpretation. 1st. He asserts that the word righteousness is never, in the Scriptures, used to designate the hypocritical performances of bad men, but uniformly applied to good acts. *Secondly*, the word *all* makes the assertion of the text universal. And *thirdly*, the word *our* in the text strengthens, in the author's apprehension, his second argument, and shows that the Prophet includes himself in the declaration. With a person who had no greater expansion of mind than to make such interpretations of Scripture as these, it would seem there could be but little room for serious argument.

In 1750, Mr. Briant published a Letter entitled, "Some friendly remarks on a Sermon lately preached at Braintree, 3d Parish, and now published to the world, by the Rev. Mr. Porter of Bridgewater; from those words in Isaiah 64. 6, &c. in a letter to the author, to be communicated to his attestators, by Lemuel Briant." At the conclusion of Mr. Porter's Sermon there had been added an "attestation," as it was called, signed by five brother clergymen, who were, doubtless, orthodox after the straitest sect, in which they express their entire agreement with the sentiments of Mr. Porter, and lament the "dreadful increase of Arminianism and other errors in the land, among ministers and people." Mr. Briant, in his Letter, assumes and maintains throughout a strain of raillery which must have been annoying to his adversaries who felt its keen edge, and which provoked them to charge him, in reply, with trifling with the subject. For this charge there was no foundation in what he had written. He was playing with *them* and with their *argument*, which must have seemed to him trifling in the extreme. But a bigoted man will always be prone to identify his opinions so closely with religion itself, that what is aimed only at him is easily referred by him to the subject, and his opponent forthwith is set down as a trifler and blasphemer.

"It must be acknowledged," says Mr. Briant, in the course of his Letter, "with all gratitude, that there has of late years been a remarkable out-pouring of the good old *Bercan* spirit; and the perils, that in times of ingorance and implicit believing have attended freedom and plainness of speech, (which is an essential branch of that holiness that becomes God's house forever,) are very considerably

abated." It may aid us in understanding the meaning of this passage, if we bear in mind who were the ministers at that day of the neighboring churches, Dr. Gay and Dr. Shute of Hingham, Mr. Eells of Scituate, were all anti-Calvinistic, and Dr. Mayhew of West Church, Boston, anti-Trinitarian, one of the boldest and most candid advocates of a liberal and rational theology. With these men Mr. Briant associated; and although he was, both from nature and choice, less prudent than some of them, yet they could not fail to sympathize with him in the views he advanced.

Mr. Briant rallies his opponent upon his differing from Calvin, his great master, in his interpretation of the text. He quotes Calvin's Commentary on the passage, giving the original Latin, and an English version of his own, and teases him with a variety of ironical explanations of this oversight, concluding with saying: "And then again, to be honest with you, I confess I have not sometimes been without my doubts whether or no the language in which Calvin wrote might not a little startle you. There being some in all ages, like those in Dr. South's, who, he says, always looked upon *Latin* to be *the language of the Beast*." — "Alas! alas! that one of his youngest children should rise up at this day against him, and find so many elder brethren to countenance, *attest*, and support this his disobedience and rebellion against him; that the cause of *good old* Mr. *Calvin* should be so wounded in the house of so many of his best friends" — He concludes thus; "Dear Sir, I presume not to subscribe myself (according to old style) your brother in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; for fear you should imagine I have not faith enough for any fellowship. But you will allow me, I trust, the privilege of a *Heathen* (*if sound and serious*) to declare that I am your fellow creature and hearty well-wisher,

"Lemuel Briant.

"Braintree, May 22, 1750."

After an interval of some time, Mr. Porter appeared before the public, to vindicate his Sermon, and to answer Mr. Briant's Letter. There was added to Mr. Porter's Letter "an Appendix by one of the attestators," longer than the Letter itself. The Appendix is subscribed by John Cotton, Halifax.

The chief object of Mr. Porter and Mr. Cotton, in the Letter and Appendix, seems to be, to draw off Mr. Briant's attention from the single point of controversy between them, namely, that which had

been suggested by Mr. Briant's Sermon, and by charging him with being heterodox on all the chief doctrines of the Calvinistic creed, to render him an object of popular distrust. They especially dwell long upon what they call the *prevarication* of Mr. Briant, in saying, that the only point in dispute between him and his opponents was in regard to the interpretation of the particular text which he takes for his Sermon; and the appendix particularly is a labored endeavor to show that Mr. Briant is unsound and Arminian in his notions upon all the main doctrines of Christianity. Mr. Foxcroft, whom Mr. Briant had designated harshly "as a verbose, dark, Jesuitical writer," added a note to the appendix, in which he charges Briant with being not merely Arminian, but Socinian; and states his reasons in the shape of inferences drawn from his writings. There was much in the *tone* assumed by these three writers calculated to excite a just indignation on the part of him whom they attacked. He replied to them in a piece dated, Braintree, April 15, 1751, and entitled, "Some more friendly remarks on Mr. Porter and Company. In a second Letter to him and two of his abettors, namely, Mr. Cotton, appendix writer, and Mr. F-xcr-ft, marginal noter. Wherein the persons, sentiments, and arguments of the Triumvirate are treated with the utmost deference that truth and faithfulness could possibly admit of." This Letter is remarkable for clear thinking and vigorous diction, for pointed wit and pungent satire, for controversial adroitness, and close logic. He confines himself, in this reply, to showing that the inferences which his opponents had made respecting his opinions, so far as they were drawn from his Sermon, (and this he contended was the subject-matter of dispute between them,) were wholly unauthorized and gratuitous; and this he does so fully as to leave them in the unenviable predicament of having brought charges against him upon no better ground than conjecture and suspicion.

There were some members of Mr. Briant's Parish and Church that were much disturbed by his liberal views of Theology, although there can be no doubt that "the body of the church and people"* accorded perfectly with their Pastor. Yet the minority were not content, until they had called an Ecclesiastical Council consisting of seven Churches, namely, The old South Church in Boston, the Second Church in Braintree, the two Churches in Wey-

* These words used in the Report of Proceedings of Council.

mouth, the First Church in Stoughton, the Second Church in Bridgewater, and the Church in Hanover. The Council met again, by adjournment, Jan. 9, 1753. Mr. Briant still declining, as he had done previously, to acknowledge their authority, or to be present at their sessions. There were eight subjects of complaint against him. The first related to his Sermon on Moral Virtue, which they pronounced just cause of offence to the aggrieved party, that is, the minority of the First Church. The second complaint related to Mr. Briant's absenting himself, as was alleged, from public fasts. The third complaint was, that Mr. Briant took no proper measures to clear himself of several scandalous sins charged upon him. The fourth ground of complaint was, that Mr. Briant disclaimed and renounced the Assembly's Catechism, and substituted another (Mr. Pierce's) in its stead. The fifth related to Mr. Briant's "recommending Mr. John Taylor's Book to the prayerful perusal of some of his brethren." The sixth was connected with the suspension of a member of Mr. Briant's Church. The seventh and eighth articles related to Mr. Briant's alleged refusal to call a church meeting, at the request of the aggrieved brethren, and to the Church's easy concurrence with their Pastor in what were called his *errors*, particularly in laying aside the Assembly's Catechism.

In their printed Report, a copy of which is before me, the ex parte Council pronounced the several complaints, recited above, to have some foundation; but, at the same time, they express the opinion, that the "aggrieved brethren" of the Church had gone too far in their high charges against the majority of the Church. They conclude their Report with "their best advices" to the two parties.

This Council effected as much as Councils ever effect, that is, nothing at all, except it may be, to increase the difficulty in which they intermeddled. One of the articles, it will be observed, consisted, not indeed of direct charges against Mr. Briant's moral character, but of a complaint that he did not take sufficient pains to clear himself of charges which had been brought against him. The charges that were made against him are doubtless to be ascribed in part to that bigotry which, as is well known, is too apt to refer any deviations from the popular standard of religious opinions, to depravity of heart and life, and in part to Mr. Briant's eccentricities, and his defiance of public sentiment in his bold publication of his theological views.

The charges that were brought against their Pastor, in the Report of the Council, were deemed worthy of notice by the Church; and they appointed a Committee, in March, 1753, whose duty it should be "to inquire into the grounds of those slanderous reports that had been spread abroad, respecting themselves, and the Rev. Mr. Lemuel Briant, their Pastor." The Report, made by this Committee, I have seen. It is signed by J. Quincy, Joseph Crosby, Moses Belcher, Edm. Quincy, John Bass, Moses Belcher, Joseph Neal, J. Palmer, Richard Brackett, and is dated, Braintree April 14, 1753. This Report is drawn up with ability, and expressed in temperate but firm language. It justifies the Pastor in the course he had taken with respect to Church discipline, and his refusing to acknowledge, in any way, the Council. It denies the truth of the charge brought against Mr. Briant of a neglect of fasts. The following extract from the concluding portion of this Report will be read by many, with interest, as embodying a spirit of freedom and liberality worthy of Protestants and Christians.

"Third. As the several scandalous immoralities, charged upon Mr. Briant, have never been proved in any one instance, so the Church ought to adhere to their vote relating to this case, and all the world besides, until they know better, ought to be in perfect charity with him.

"Fourth. Though Mr. Briant has too much neglected catechising, yet he is now ready (as soon as his health permits) to teach our children such parts of the catechism as he apprehends agreeable to the Scriptures. Nor can we think that any Christian Society ought to be so attached to any *human composure*, as to make it a *crime* in their Pastor to prefer *pure Scripture instruction* to it.

"That we have no evidence of Mr. Briant's having made any particular profession of his faith at his ordination, or that any such thing was required of him by the Council then present; or if he had made any such profession, it could not destroy his right of private judgment, nor be obligatory upon him, any further than it continued to appear to him agreeable to reason and Scripture.

"And fifth. That our Rev. Pastor's recommending Mr. John Taylor's book to the *prayerful perusal* of one or more of his Parishoners, upon supposition of its being erroneous, was worthy a Protestant minister; and we cannot but commend our Pastor for the pains he takes to promote a free and impartial examination into

all articles of our holy religion, so that *all may judge, even of themselves, what is right.*

"As to the supposed doctrinal errors charged upon Mr. Briant, we shall not presume to condemn him, although he may differ from some of us; because, as he has an undoubted right to judge for himself, so we do not apprehend the difference in opinion between him and any of this Society so great, as to justify *any breach or schism* in the Church, or to cause any uncharitable censures from men of a Christian disposition.

"We have made our above Report according to the best evidences we have been able to collect. We hope none will hereafter charge us with vindicating our Pastor, or any one else, in immoral practices, or in contemning the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Religion; for we not only profess the most religious regard for the sacred Scriptures, but also for the practice of virtue; and we hope that the aggrieved will, each one for himself in particular, consider whether his conduct, towards this Society, and their Pastor, has been such as became the Gospel of peace, and thereupon repent and amend in every instance wherein he finds himself to have erred; and that we may all sit down together in peace and charity, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

R. Page 55.

Mr. Anthony Wibird, the seventh minister of the Church, was a native of Portsmouth, N. H. He was a graduate of Harvard University, in the year 1747. He was chosen, Oct. 8, 1754, by a unanimous vote, Pastor of the Braintree First Church. At first it was voted that he should receive a settlement of £133 6*s*. 8*d*. lawful money, and £80 yearly salary. He declined the invitation; but being requested to reconsider the matter, he accepted the offer finally made him, which was, that he should receive £100 salary and no settlement. The following account of Mr. Wibird's ordination is in the Church Records, in his own hand-writing.

"Wednesday, February the fifth, 1755, Anthony Wibird was ordained Pastor of the 1st Church of Christ in Braintree. The

Churches sent to, were the 2d and 3d Churches in said Town, the Rev. Mr. Niles pastor of the 2d, and the Rev. Mr. Taft pastor of the 3d; to the Rev. Messrs. Sewall and Prince of Boston; to the 1st Church in Cambridge, the Rev. Mr. Appleton pastor; to the 1st Church in Portsmouth, the Rev. Mr. Langdon pastor; the Rev. Mr. Bowman pastor of the Church in Dorchester; the Rev. Mr. Robbins, pastor of the Church in Milton; the Rev. Mr. Smith of Weymouth; the Rev. Mr. Gay of Hingham; and the Rev. Mr. Dunbar pastor of a Church in Stoughton. The Rev. Mr. Langdon began with prayer. The Rev. Mr. Appleton preached from those words in the 10th Levit. 3d. I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. The Rev. Mr. Gay gave the charge. The Rev. Mr. Dunbar the right hand of fellowship."

In the interval between Mr. Briant's dismission and Mr. Wibird's settlement, there were seventeen Baptisms. During Mr. Wibird's ministry there were 781 Baptisms, and 221 were admitted to full communion.

"For many years previous to his death he was unable, from bodily infirmities, to attend upon the duties of his office." * The present Senior Pastor of the Church, Rev. Peter Whitney, was settled as colleague with him, Feb. 5, 1800. Mr. Wibird died, June 4, 1800, in the 46th year of his ministry, and his remains lie in the same tomb with Mr. Hancock; but there is no inscription to his memory. In the Church Records is the following notice of the event.

"Died June 4, Rev. Anthony Wibird, Senior Pastor of the Congregational Church in Quincy, aged 72. His funeral was attended on the 7th, when the Rev. Mr. Williams of Weymouth made the prayer, and the Rev. Mr. Weld of Braintree preached, from those words of the Apostle Paul, 'I have finished my course.'"

During Mr. Wibird's ministry the North Precinct of Braintree was made a separate town. The subject of dividing the Town had been considered many years before it took place. In the North Precinct Records I find the following:

"Feb. 9, 1756. Voted, that it was their mind to be separate from the other two Precincts in Braintree.

"Voted, that it was their mind that the town of Braintree should be divided into two townships."

* Whitney's History of Quincy.

A Committee was chosen at the same time, to consider this matter, namely, Hon. John Quincy Esq., Mr. Josiah Quincy, Major Joseph Crosby. After this we find no further notice of the subject till 1792, when what was once the North Precinct of Braintree became incorporated as a distinct town, by the name of Quincy. "Rev. Anthony Wibird was requested to give a name to the place. But he refusing, a similar request was made to the Hon. Richard Cranch, who recommended its being called Quincy, in honor of Col. John Quincy, who had been the owner of the Mt. Wollaston farm, which had given the first civilized name to the place." *

Mr. Wibird was never married. He seems to have been a man of some singularities. He never published anything that I can discover. He is said to have possessed considerable literary taste, and to have read poetry with fine expression.

Since writing the above, I am informed by Lemuel Brackett Esq., that it is his impression, that Mr. Wibird preached an Election Sermon, which was thought highly of at the time it was delivered. Mr. Brackett also states that Mr. Wibird took pains in learning a method of short hand-writing; so that his manuscripts, could any have been procured, would probably have been illegible and useless.

S. Page 55.

Rev. Peter Whitney, the eighth minister of the First Congregational Church in Quincy, (formerly Braintree,) was a native of Northborough, Mass., where his father was a settled minister many years. He graduated at Harvard University in 1791, and having kept school in Hingham some time, was settled in the ministry in this town, Feb. 5, 1800. The services at his ordination were performed by the following clergymen: Introductory prayer, by the Rev. Prof. Ware of Cambridge, then minister of Hingham; Sermon, by Rev. Mr. Whitney of Northborough; Ordaining prayer by Rev. Dr. Fiske of West Cambridge; Charge by Rev. Mr. Cum-

* See Whitney's History of Quincy.

mings, of Billerica; Right hand of fellowship by Rev. Mr. McKean of Milton; Concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Harris of Dorchester.

Mr. Whitney has published the following sermons, viz.

Sermon at the Ordination of Perez Lincoln at Gloucester in 1805. Sermon on the Death of Richard and Mary Cranch in 1811. A Fast Sermon in 1812. Sermon on the Death of Mrs. Abigail Adams in 1818. Sermon on the Death of President John Adams, 1826. And a New Year's Discourse in 1837.

In 1835, June 3d, the present writer was installed. The services at his installation were conducted as follows, viz.

Introductory prayer and selections from the Scriptures were by Rev. Mr. Whitney of West Roxbury; Sermon by Rev. Mr. Frothingham of the First Church, Boston; Prayer of installation by Rev. Peter Whitney of Quincy; Charge by Rev. Dr. Parkman of Boston; Right hand of fellowship by Rev. Mr. Cunningham of Dorchester; Address to the society by Rev. Mr. Gannett of Boston; and Concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Huntoon of Milton.

T. Pages 7, 36, 37, 57.

The four wood cuts contained in this pamphlet represent objects directly associated with the early history of our church. They are from drawings made by Mr. George W. Beale, Jr.

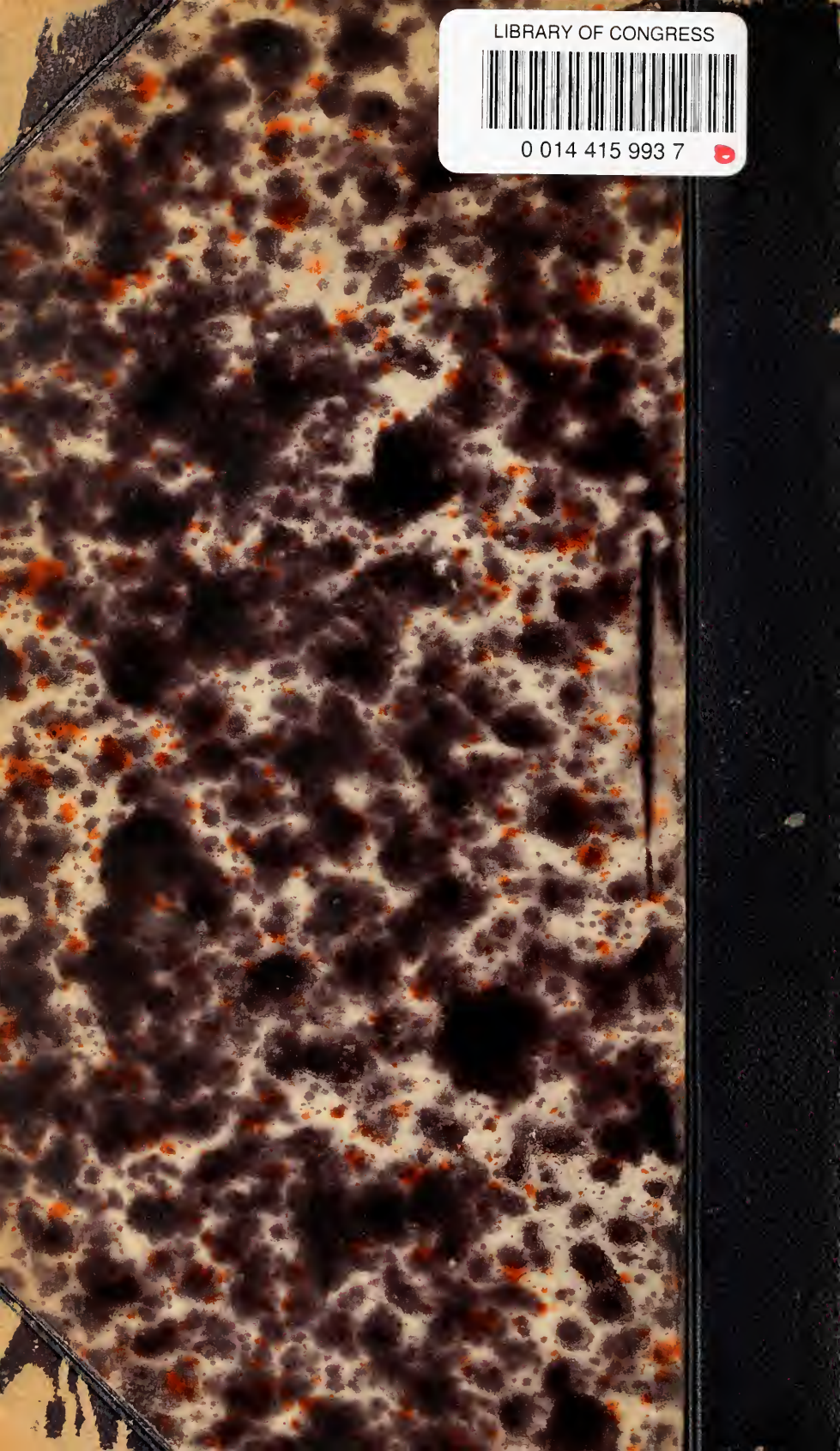
The *first* in order is the oldest of the communion vessels, having the following inscription: "Joanna Yorke 1685. B. C."

The *second* is the vane that belonged to the old stone meeting house, that stood near the ground occupied at present by the Second Congregational Church. It will be observed that it bears date 1666. It now stands opposite the mansion-house of Hon. John Quincy Adams, where it was placed by his father, President John Adams, a few years before his death.

The *third* is a sketch of the hill, belonging to the farm of Hon. Mr. Adams, which gave the original name to this plantation, before it became a town. The hill still bears the name of Mount Wollaston.

The *fourth* represents the gravestones, still standing in our burial-place, of the first Pastor and Teacher of Braintree Church. The one to the left, Mr. Tompson's is, I presume, the original stone. The other is probably modern. Mr. Hancock has the following note to one of his Century Discourses. "Mr Flynt's monument is still to be seen, though much gone to decay, but I hope to see the tomb of the prophet rebuilt." What Mr. Hancock suggested was, most likely, done soon after.

I will venture to express the hope that the monument that covers the remains of Mr. Fiske, Mr. Marsh, Mr. Hancock, and Mr. Wibird may be rebuilt.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